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HOSTAGES TO PEACE

*PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN OF
DEMOCRACY*

HOSTAGES TO PEACE

*PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN
OF DEMOCRACY*

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HOSTAGES TO PEACE

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To
My Mother

CONTENTS

BY WAY OF EXPLANATION	9
I. WAR IN EVERY GENERATION?	25
II. PATRIOTISM	52
III. THE NURSERY OF MARS	62
IV. IN PLACE OF TERROR	80
V. THE DISCIPLINE OF FREEDOM	97
VI. PRESTIGE—ITS CAUSE AND CURE	121
VII. THE SENSE OF POWER	137
VIII. MILITARY TOYS	156
IX. THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM	174
POSTSCRIPT	198
INDEX	205

BY WAY OF EXPLANATION

Dear Jack:

You have asked your mother what there is in patriotism, and she has passed your question along to me. I am going to try to tell you.

Ten years ago you were born in the United States. You can't remember that, of course, but it was just an accident that it happened to be in the United States. That was where your mother and dad were living. They might have been living in Timbuctoo, or Moscow, or Alaska, or anywhere. When you were born, there was a family all ready to receive you, and I know how happy they were when you came. This family of yours is composed of your older brother, yourself and your two younger sisters and your father and your mother. This is a group.

Have you ever wondered why this group stays together and considers itself a family quite distinct from all the other families? Why don't you bust up? The answer is that you six people, by living together, are getting a lot of satisfaction out of that fact. It is only possible for you to stay together if every one of you behaves in such a way as to make that family group a happy one for all of you. If anyone in the group tried to get everything and give nothing, then

there would be a bust-up. If your daddy did not want to have the bother of working hard to look after you, you could not all live together. And if your mother did not work very hard and darn your socks and iron and bake and clean, you could not live together, either.

Some of the things you have to do, like shoveling snow, or shining shoes, or doing your homework, often seem hard because you would rather be doing something else, but most of the time you go through with your chores. Oftentimes you would rather stay in bed than go to school, but you get up. Oftentimes your daddy would like to read the paper rather than take you out for a walk, but he takes you out.

There are three things that every member of your family has to learn if your home is to be a good place to live in. CO-OPERATION, COMPROMISE and TOLERANCE—those are three big words, and I don't want you to become frightened at them, because I am going to try to tell you what they mean.

First, let's talk about CO-OPERATION. If you want to build a play house where the gang can meet, you get them all together first, and then you work towards getting the house or hut built. Each one does the best he can. And if you are wise you will organize your work so that the one who is the best at nailing will take over that job, and the one who is the best at sawing will do that; or if you are all the same, you will take turns. But at any rate you will work together. And when it is all done you won't say, "This is my house," or "This hut is mine," but you will talk about "our house." And you will all be proud of

having finished the job, but none of you will think that you did it alone or that you could have done better if you had been alone. This idea of co-operation takes a long time to learn because there are so many people who become so proud of what they do themselves that they become jealous of their own smartness and are afraid that if they work with someone else they may have to divide the credit. After all, there is no fun in credit. The fun is in the doing of the job, whatever it is. And if you find yourself looking for credit, to have somebody pat you on the back and say how good you are, then you will often be disappointed because somebody neglects to do this. If you get the fun out of doing the job, it doesn't matter what other people say, or whether they notice it at all. There's no chance of your being disappointed *as long as you keep on doing*. Then you will not be interested in beating somebody, because if you are interested in the fun you are getting, you can feel happy with the other fellow who is having just as much fun and you don't have to worry about who is doing the best.

In your home everybody co-operates. Your dad earns the money and your mother keeps the house and you go to school and you all help each other out, and that is why it is so nice to live there. If you had to get your own meals and do your own washing and darn your own socks, that would not be so much fun. But when the whole family co-operates without worrying about who does the most and who does the least, then you have a lot of time left over for doing some of the things that are more interesting.

Second, let's take COMPROMISE. When you are out with the gang, and you want to play baseball, you hope somebody is going to pitch for you when you come up to bat, and that someone is going to chase the ball if you happen to hit it. And when you are put out, you are willing to go out in the field and take your turn at chasing the ball. In other words, you are going to do your fielding in order to get your turn at the bat. Also at home, when your little sister is sick and you want to listen to the radio and your mother tells you it may waken Victoria, you are willing to give up the Lone Ranger, or whatever it is, for one night so she can have her rest. You know that if there are only four candies, you are willing to give each of your brothers and sisters one, even though you know you could eat the whole four yourself. Otherwise you would feel badly if you had eaten them all, because you want to live with these brothers and sisters, and you don't want to feel that you are getting any more than they are. If you are playing out in the yard, you are willing to let your friends play with your things in order that you may enjoy their company.

Now this is what we call a spirit of compromise. What it means is, you are willing to give up something in order that you may get something else. The "something else" usually is the pleasure you feel in being with other people—because kids are more interesting than things. It is far more fun to ski and skate and swim when you are with others, because their company makes what you are doing far more enjoyable to you.

Finally we come to TOLERANCE. You have heard people say, "I can't tolerate So-and-so." What that means is, they don't like that person for some reason or other. I don't know whether you have developed likes and dislikes, but I'm quite sure you would be unusual if you hadn't. There are some kids who always bust up a game, and they are a nuisance, so you don't like to play with them. And I think you are quite right. Right, I mean, to arrange your life so that you don't have to play with them. You will leave them alone. But suppose you were playing with a boy and somebody came along and said, "You should not play with that boy. He's a Jew." I wonder what you would say. You see, as we grow up we are bound to like and dislike certain *things*, such as strawberries or spinach or medicine. But when it comes to *people*, we like or dislike them according to whether they help us to enjoy life more or less. Just because a boy is a Jew, that does not make him less interesting. Just because a boy's father is on relief, that does not make him less co-operative. And so as you grow up you must look for the qualities in a friend that add to your enjoyment and interest and companionship. You will find, as you listen to the grown-ups, that they are talking about qualities in people which have nothing to do with companionship and interest, but have to do with certain prejudices that all adults have. Be very careful that you never use these prejudices in your choice of companions—because then you may miss knowing someone who has all the qualities you are looking for.

There are times, when you are playing, when you

try to boss the gang. And there are times of course when somebody else would like to be boss. Sometimes the biggest boy likes to boss and sometimes it is the boy who has the most money or owns the ball and bat or has the best clothes. You must be very careful that you never use your size, or your toys, or the fact that your daddy owns an automobile, as a means of bossing the other kids, because you have arranged none of these things yourself. The only time you are entitled to boss is when you are playing a game and you can play it better than anyone else—and then you won't want to boss them. And if you don't play as well as the others, let the ones who know more about it teach you—for that is the way they boss. As you grow up, then, you will find that you have an admiration for people who can do things, but you won't envy them. You will just try to imitate them. You will try to be like them. You won't want to have a lot of money just for the sake of money or clothes, or to boss people because there is fun in bossing. You will be interested only in doing things, and in that way you will get all the fun there is in living without having to say nasty things about other people who do these things better or worse.

When you get older, you will find there is more than one way of looking at things. You will find that things are not as cut and dried as you think them now—that some people will say, "This is the way to do," and others will have another way. Remember, that as long as they don't force you to do whatever it is their way, they are as much entitled to their opinion as you are to your own. This does not mean you

can't change your mind, because you are just as likely to be wrong as the other fellow. But don't think any less of the other fellow because he thinks differently. There is often a lot of fun in exchanging ideas. Some people call that arguing, but if you just exchange ideas for the sake of the fun there is in it, then you never have to get angry.

Now, Jack, I am sure you feel that your family is a fine group—and you're right. Perhaps you think it is the best family in the world, and as far as you are concerned, perhaps you are right. But your chum next door, if he is as lucky as you, thinks the same way—and if in his family they all co-operate, and are willing to compromise with and tolerate each other, then it is not a question of your family being better than his or his being better than yours. They are both good family groups, not because you children were born into your special families, but because of the way your mother and dad and you children have behaved all along. You would not want to move over into the other boy's family, and he would not want to move over into yours.

Sometimes, you know, when fathers and mothers die, we have to put children into other families. If those children have the three qualities I spoke about, then they fit in just as well as if they had been born into the groups where they go. There are some families that don't get along as well as yours because they have not learned these three things, and in that sense they are not good families and you would not want to live with them. It is perfectly right for you to say

that you would not want to, and to be glad and proud that your family is worth while. This feeling of pride is justifiable because you have helped to make the family what it is, and you hope to continue.

I want to say again, Jack, that you are proud of your family not because you were born into it, but because your dad and mother have taught you to live in such a way that your family is a pleasant place to be. If you did not do your part, then it would be less pleasant. If you raised a fuss when you had to go to bed, or if you went out and broke the windows next door or hurt your younger sister, then your family would cease to be a good family. So your pride is in your own work. You have helped to make yours a good family.

Now, a bunch of families get together and another group is formed, and we call it a town. Each family member is now a townspeople, and if this town is to be a pleasant place to live in, then each person has to co-operate and compromise and be tolerant. This is harder to do because there are more people around. The more people, the harder it is to co-operate. You have to give up more, and there are more opinions and therefore more chances of being intolerant. But children are not expected to learn this before they are able—and so you are just learning now to be a citizen. The same behavior that makes you a good member of the family will make you a good citizen. And then you can be proud of your town because you have helped to make it what it is. But you don't have to be intolerant of another town, for that town may

be organized the same as yours, and be just as pleasant a place to live in.

And a bunch of towns makes a country. And if the towns all co-operate and give up something for the unity of the whole group, and are tolerant of each other's views, then it is a good country and you can be proud of that country because you have helped to make it so. But there are other countries, too, and the people there may be proud of what they have done to make their countries pleasant. This pride is patriotism—but it is the same sort of feeling as the pride you feel towards your family. If you are proud of your family because they have money or because you live in a better house than others, or in the swank part of the town rather than beyond the railroad tracks, then that pride is not justified and leads to difficulties. You see, you may lose your money and have to move, or your part of the town may grow shabby, and then you haven't anything to be proud of; and that may make you jealous. And so if you are proud of your town because it has the biggest high school or the best basketball team or something like that, the high school may burn down or the basketball team be beaten, and then you cannot be proud any more. And if you are proud because your country has bigger wheat fields and longer railroad tracks and taller buildings than some other country, these too may be destroyed, and then you haven't anything to be proud of.

This is the wrong kind of patriotism. When I was talking about the family a little while ago, and I

mentioned compromise, I spoke of your having to give up certain things so that everybody would be happier. And it is the same way when you live in a country. We call this accepting responsibility. It is very easy to take what is coming to you and forget that you owe something. In the family it is easy to take your three meals a day and have a clean bed to sleep in and forget that your dad and your mother had to work to get these things—that you owe it to them to help as much as you can, and to make things easier. In a country also it is easy to expect the firemen to put out your fires, and the policemen to direct traffic, and water to come out of the faucet—and to forget that you have an obligation to help with all these things. You know your dad pays taxes so these things can be paid for. But you too have the obligation or the responsibility of making it easy for the people whose job it is to do this work as best they can. And if you do that and your city is clean and your parks are nice places to play in and your schools are comfortable, then you can be proud of your city or country because you are helping to make it what it is.

You see, Jack, patriotism is not flag-waving, and patriotism is not false pride. But unfortunately we still have to have armies just as we still have to have policemen. If all the people in the town were raised the same as you are being raised, there would be no need for policemen except for peaceful things like traffic regulation and so on. And if all the people in all the towns of the country, and in other countries

too, were raised that way, there wouldn't need to be any armies.

Let me say again—just because you were born into your family, that is no reason why you should be proud. And just because you were born in the United States is not a reason for your being proud. What you are proud of is the fact that the people in your country are trying their best to act co-operatively in a spirit of compromise, and with tolerance towards others. But if they fall short of that ideal, then you are no longer proud of that country, nor need you be. I think it is a mistake to think that any country can carry on when you say, "My country! May she ever be right, but my country, right or wrong," because it is no more the right of a group to be wrong than of an individual.

Now then, if at any time another country, whose people do not seem to want to live the way you do, wishes to come in and make you change your ways by force, you will have to ask yourself whether you could live the way these other people do. If your answer is "No," then your country can resist or fight to keep what you think is necessary for a pleasant life. If this is the case, your country goes to war. But you would not want to say to other people who live differently, "You must live the same as we do," because then you might have to fight a war to convince them. Of course, there is nothing wrong with pointing out to people that the way you live is the best; but you must let them form their own judgment. That is what I mean by tolerance.

Well, Jack, you must be wondering what is going on in this country of mine because we are at war. So let me tell you what I think. I don't suppose there are many people who really know what is going on all over the world. And it is hard for those of us who know very little to find out the facts. I can only learn through the newspapers and over the radio and from gossip (when you listen to a lecture, you know, you are just listening to a gossip), and I don't know all the facts that led up to the present war. It seems to me, however, from my reading and listening over the past five or six years, that in Germany obedience has been forced on the people—that instead of compromising all through, it is just part of the people who have to give up things—and from their treatment of the Jews I am sure there can't be tolerance.

So I don't think I would be happy if I had to live under that kind of rule. We Canadians, as you know, are part of the British Empire. After living in it for nearly half a century, I find that the only times I have been unhappy were when I had not contributed my share of co-operation, compromise and tolerance. And that was my fault, because there is nothing to prevent me or anyone else from following out this plan under our scheme of government. Mind you, it is not perfect, but the fault lies with us, as individuals who have not learned our lessons well. I believe the British Empire stands for the ideals I expressed above—and as far as I can gather, this war is in defense of those ideals, which apparently were threatened. You see, I happen to have been born in the

British Empire. If I did not think the Empire stood for these things, then I would get out and move somewhere else where I could expect these ideals to be upheld. But as long as I do think so, then, because I owe a debt of responsibility to this country, I have to help as much as I can at this period when war has been declared.

At the present time, Jack, your country has decided not to go to war and I sincerely hope that it will not be necessary for that decision to be changed. Although your form of government is different from ours, the ideals, I think, are the same, and so you may have to decide whether your ideals are in peril or not and whether they are worth fighting for. The one who works hardest at making his country a good place to live in is the one who is most concerned about keeping it from harm. But don't be led astray by any fuzzy talk about patriotism and liberty and freedom. In fact, you should be very careful when people use these words, because oftentimes they are trying to hide something you would not see or understand. You must ask yourself whether you are being permitted to contribute to the group in which you live by co-operating, compromising and tolerating; and you will expect others to do the same. Then you have to ask how much you are willing to sacrifice in order to maintain this position. That is the question and nothing else.

You are too young, Jack, to have to make this decision. But someday, when you are grown up, you may be in the position of helping others to think the

way you do, and the best way to convince them is to show them that by following your plan, living is far more fun than any other way.

Yours,

W. E. B.

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HOSTAGES TO PEACE

*PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN OF
DEMOCRACY*

I. WAR IN EVERY GENERATION?

Dear Bill:

You'll be surprised to hear from me, I know. It seems such a long time ago that we were children, and together so much, though I suppose I would resent anyone reminding me of this. It's three years since I was back to see your folks, and at that time you had gone to Oregon or Hawaii or somewhere.

I was glad to see your mother so well. She didn't seem a day older than when you and Leo and I and the others used to sit on the bench under the grape-arbors in the summertime and listen to her telling us stories of her trip across the ocean in a sailboat, while your dad tried to tell us how he got the cow down the cellar steps so the Prussians wouldn't take it during the forays in the war of '66. (I think you were mean when you told us on your return from Germany in 1930 that you visited your father's home and discovered there was no cellar, and that the story must have been apocryphal.)

But I'm not writing this letter just to remind you of the "good old days." What I want to know is, what about this war? You have some reputation as a psychologist; and what I would like to know is, what have you to say for yourself, these days, and for us all?

I'm not worried about my family getting into the actual conflict. Don was wounded in the last war and still gets a small pension. He's beyond the age of the first few bunches, anyway, and our two boys are still too young to go. They're not too young to talk about it, though—and they're *always* talking about it. It's their ideas on war that I'm worried about. What shall I tell them when they ask me questions?

I hate to hear all this talk of casualty lists, and the missing, and—oh! you know what it was last time! Shall I forbid the children to see, or read, or hear about the horrors and recriminations that are going on? I do not number myself among those who think the radio, the movies, the funnies, and the tabloid are wholly a menace, but—there is today such a pressure of propaganda, one way and the other, that I am often bewildered when I am presented with the problem of having to make a decision.

Now, Bill, you know *something* about children—although that seems funny when I look back and recognize you as the untidy-haired, barefooted, grape-stained scamp you were. What *am* I to tell them? George is in high school now, and already speaks of following in his father's legal footsteps. Jack (the one you saw when he was a baby) is in fifth grade. And we have two girls—Jane, seven, and Victoria, five.

Is war necessary? Is it an instinct? Must every generation go through this blood-letting? Is this the only thing children can look forward to with any certainty? I would like to hear what you have to say about it.

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

It is a long time since I heard from you, but I still would remember to call you "Beth" rather than "Liz." Remember the day you declared your emancipation from the tomboy stage and insisted that all of us call you by your grown-up name? Somehow or other I liked Liz better—and still do. Perhaps it is because of a nostalgia for those pre-war days before the Great War, when the whole tribe would gather on Sunday evenings. We used to have to wait till the grown-ups ate, and then all the kids sat down together. What a mob there was! Uncles, aunts, cousins, in-laws—and we, of course, were the outlaws. A happy childhood is the greatest heritage of man. Now we are all scattered—Buffalo, Detroit, Hamilton, Toronto, Rochester.

We were all too young to *understand* the last war, though some of us were in it. (Walter M., as I suppose you know, died last year from the effects of that mine-sweeping disaster in the North Sea; never could fully recover from it. George's wife never married again, and now her kids are old enough for this war.) We didn't ask any questions, other than "Should I go, or shouldn't I?"—and then we went. "Isn't it awful?" we said, or "Isn't it exciting?" We felt that it was all the Kaiser's fault; but the uniforms were fascinating, especially the kilts. And war, they had taught us, was inevitable.

This time it's different. Here you are, writing me the kind of letter I've been hoping to get. I hope the answer helps you as much as it will help me to clarify my own thinking.

We Canadians are right in the midst of it. You in the States are on the fringe. I hope it will never be necessary for you people to get into it, no matter where your sympathies lie.

My position is different from yours in one respect, but in another the same. We are at war, so that decision is over and done with. You may ask why Canada declared war. Was it because England did so? I think Stephen Leacock's remarks about this situation explain it fully. He was asked, "If Britain is at war, must Canada go to war?" He answered "No." "Well then, if Britain declares war, will Canada declare war?" "Yes." "Well, why?" "Because she has to!" And so we have.

The United States has not declared war and probably will not, so far as I can see. And so there you are, not at war; and here am I, at war. In that respect our immediate attitudes are different.

But we are both worried about children. *They* are not at war either in Canada or in your country. At what age they cease to be children and become combatants is a pathetic and tragic question. But at present our children are not at war. What can we do about it? How can we protect them from the effects of war now—and tomorrow? These are negative questions. The much larger question is, How can we raise our children so that when they grow up *they* will not make war?

And so we come to your first question, *Is war an instinct?* My answer is No. But there are a great many people who think the answer is Yes. These fall into three classes. For one, there is the scientific group,

who claim that since we are descended from animals, and since animals fight, hence we are born with a fighting instinct. (It is all so logical.) In another group are those philosophers who reached their heights in Germany, but are by no means confined to that country, who feel that war is inevitable and, strangely enough, that it is a *good thing*. They would have it that war is like the blood-letting of the eighteenth-century surgeons (or barbers, rather); that every so often a nation has to let blood so as to rid itself of the ugly and bad humors that collect in the system. And finally there are those who think war is inevitable because of the unfortunate event in Eden, and its tragic consequence in the altercation between Cain and Abel; hence man is destined to war until the millennium; and then the world will end.

Let us deal with these in order. What scientific data are at hand to prove war an instinct? (Recently, in *Life* magazine, appeared a picture of a monkey in the London Zoo watching a bomber flying overhead. This picture recalled to my mind that famous telegram which one brother in Paris sent to his brother in America: "Who's loony now?") An instinct, as you know, is something an individual inherits as part of his legacy as a member of a species. An instinct is a function, a doing, rather than structure or working part. The butterfly inherits wings, and when it emerges from the pupa stage it flies. The wings are part of the structure; the flying is instinctive. The butterfly learns very little, if anything, through experience. But as we consider more and more complex individuals, we find that the learned behavior over-

shadows the unlearned or instinctive patterns. Thus it is wrong to assume that children walk instinctively, because anyone who has watched a child *learning* to walk knows how difficult a task it may be.

In man, the learned behavior is so apparent that one wonders if there are any instinctive patterns at all. There are, of course; many of them; but they are hidden by the overlayers of our learned acts. All muscular movements are dependent on a highly developed organization which permits co-ordinated movements that are taken for granted, but the later activities seem so much more important that we forget the former. Thus a baby moves its arms and legs at birth. Later he reaches for a spoon and walks out the door. These are acquired skills; they have been learned. But if the movement were not there to begin with, these later skills would not have developed.

As soon as the child appreciates that the objects in his environment are of two kinds, first, things which he can push around and manipulate as he wishes, and second, living things that act somewhat as he does—and, moreover, when he first appreciates that these living things are like himself—then we say he has become *self-conscious*. But this self-consciousness develops only in a social environment. He finds as he grows up that the living things are very interesting and discovers that to have them in his environment satisfies to a greater extent than anything else some of the motives, particularly his attitudes. He learns to like some people and dislike others. The appetites of change and sex and particularly the emotions are pleasantly satisfied socially. Thus a social life is not

necessary but becomes highly desirable. Can you wonder that if one studies adults alone, one is led to the conclusion that social activity is an essential part of human activity, and hence instinctive? But I must insist that this conclusion cannot be borne out by observation of the development of human infants.

Thus, the manner in which a human infant develops a social consciousness is wholly dependent upon the social patterns that surround him as he grows up. If, in his immediate social environment, namely, his family, the pattern is one of aggressiveness, then the child's pattern will be an aggressive one.

The emotional stimulation of a social environment may become a predominant influence in childhood. Affection then comes to the fore; and the use of approval and disapproval grows to be a powerful factor in the selection of behavior patterns. If, in any society, approval is given to unwarranted aggression, then the child takes this as an acceptable pattern. In simple language, if the parents are continuously dinning into the child that he should fight for his rights, the child is more likely to emphasize the fighting than he is to understand what are his rights. Then, when "fighting" is given an artificial value, he comes to look upon fighting itself as an end rather than a means.

It is an interesting comment, don't you think, on the development of so-called civilization that human beings are the only animals that fight for the sake of fighting, rather than for pursuit of the satisfaction of a fundamental motive or need? You may ask whether

it is possible to bring up a child who will look upon fighting as an unnecessary if not a stupid form of behavior. The answer, of course, is Yes, providing one can train the child to use more intelligent and efficient methods to get what he wants. And yet it is easy to understand that if, in the literature and the folk lore which the child hears and reads, war is raised to the highest pitch of social approval, children will strive towards this goal without thinking of the satisfactions they are missing along the way. Surely this is not to be wondered at.

I hope I'll be able to come back to this point and expand it; but for the present I'd like you to ponder over it and ask yourself whether this brief outline of child development does not fit very closely the facts as we see them.

The term instinct is often used in another sense, as neither structure nor function but as the drive, purpose, urge or motive. Thus we say that a cat instinctively protects its young, a wolf instinctively hurts its prey, a moose instinctively seeks its mate. It is in this connection that most of the erroneous ideas creep into our thinking. The implication, in these instances, is that these animals can't help doing what they do. They are so constituted that they must do that particular thing. You can see how easily one may fall into this way of interpreting behavior.

To my way of thinking, this use of the term instinct is far too simple an explanation. By this method, when we talk of human behavior, we can run wild in our interpretation. Thus a woman instinctively protects her young, but certainly she

doesn't instinctively know how to bring up the young. Man is not instinctively courteous or moral or industrious or honest, nor has he instinctively the opposite of any of these characteristics. A child does not instinctively speak the language of his parents, nor eat like them, dress like them, swear like them, worship like them. Man is not instinctively religious or irreligious, ambitious or lazy, gregarious or seclusive, and so on. To say so, would be to miss the arbitrary character of our social institutions and the infinite capacity man has for changing his behavior patterns.

It would be a glorious thing if these so-called instincts actually existed. Then we could select a man who was courteous, courageous, moral, industrious, co-operative and zealous, and then select a woman with the same qualities, breed them, and get rid of all the others. Their children, if the thing worked, would have the same qualities as their parents, and life would be wonderful. This was tried with Noah, figuratively speaking, with you-know-what result.

No, I'm afraid this interpretation of human behavior is too simple. It is such a beautiful alibi. You hear people say, "You can't change human nature." This is true if you mean the structure and its functioning. The liver acts the same as it always did, and so does the pupil of the eye and the large intestine. But when you put them all together and bring forth a living child, you can, by training, make of that child any kind of a behaving social organism you like. Education can change him in spite of his inherited protoplasm, not because of it.

And so I will confine my use of the term instinct to the behavior patterns and say that in man the instincts are present at birth and are represented in the initial functioning, but that experience begins immediately to build up a system of actions which are independent of the instinctive patterns and limited only by the obvious. For example, birds fly, man walks, fish swim, and so on.

A little while back I said something about "purpose." If I deny the use of the term instinct to this concept, how then can I describe it? The reason there is so much confusion about the term purpose lies in its implication that we are trying to ask the question, Why? For example—Why does a child walk? It is relatively easy to describe *how* a child walks, but when we begin to ask why, we get into difficulties.

We can say the child walks to get somewhere. Usually we preface such an answer with the word "because." But that is just a subterfuge. Each answer suggests another "why" question. Why does Jimmie walk? Because he wants to get to his father. Why does he want to get to his father? Because he likes him. Why does he like him? Because he is a nice father. . . . Every time you ask why, this train of questions and answers begins and strangely enough has no ending, unless you decide to stop it by saying there is an ultimate, fundamental, infinite purpose that starts everything.

This device is acceptable only if you can believe it. The origins of beliefs, Beth, are difficult to dig up. As long as one stays within a group in which common beliefs are held, there is seldom any question of

doubting or even analyzing carefully. Some years ago I was in Utah and happened to meet a man high in the affairs of the Mormon Church. In a discussion we were having, I, perhaps impertinently, asked him why he believed in the revelations which, as you know, form an important part of their doctrines; and he countered by asking me why I believed in the Virgin Birth which I, as a Christian, would believe. It was rather a revelation to me to see the close apposition of the two states of mind. I, of course, questioned the credulity of believing that a succession of appointed individuals would get direct revelations; but I could see that it was no more fantastic than some of the beliefs in Christian doctrine.

Then when I was in Russia, discussing, with a member of the Department of Psychology at the University of Moscow, the reconciliation of some of his scientific principles with the doctrine of dialectical materialism, I was again struck with the fact that beliefs were after all inexplicable.

In behavior, the important thing is the phenomenon of belief and not the content. The joker is this: whereas it is possible to refine your "description" of a phenomenon (this is called experimentation or research), you cannot do anything with "causes" but talk about them. Thus you can prove that in a vacuum a filament of tungsten will incandesce, whereas if there is oxygen it will burn up. Hence the electric light bulb is made so that there is no oxygen in it. Why?—so the filament will throw off light. But you can see that this is not answering the "Why." There is no suggestion in this answer as to *why* the filament

acts the way it does. And so the physicist is also forced to push his inquiries further and further back until he too must suppose a fundamental infinite purpose or plan. And so too the astronomer, the chemist, the botanist, the geographer and everyone who seeks to inquire. This conclusion is not postulated because these people don't "know enough," for, strange as it may seem, the more they study and learn, the more essential this conclusion becomes. Jeans, in *The Mysterious Universe*, for example, comes to such a conclusion.

The ordinary methods of science are good enough for inquiring into *how* things work; and these methods have become refined into rules, one set of which we call logic. But once you get outside the system, then logic does not apply. So we can study how the liver liberates and stores sugar but why, literally, God only knows—if you believe in God. However, that's another story.

Now you see, I hope, "why" there is so much confusion. The scientist, or better, the psychologist, is trying to include in his scientific system a phenomenon which cannot be made scientific or logical. We can never decide, *scientifically*, what the ultimate purpose of life really is!

If the psychologist is reasonable, he does the same as the physicist, who, although not knowing "why" the atom is, can certainly "bust" it. So the psychologist, although he doesn't know why the child, or man, or woman, or chimpanzee acts, can certainly inquire into the "how" of the action.

Taking, as the starting point, life—which means

activity—we can inquire into the factors that determine the *immediate* act.

Thus, when a child is sitting at the table with a plate of spinach in front of him, he must do something. He can either eat the spinach or not. As a psychologist I can study the factors that will “cause” him to eat or not eat. Notice, I am not inquiring into why he should *eat*, but rather the circumstances that determine whether at this particular time he is going to eat the *spinach* or not.

This is called the study of motivation. Every act is said to be “caused” by a motive. Can we study these motives? Yes. However, we must be perfectly aware that we are not inquiring into the fundamental thingumajig I mentioned above, but rather into the secondary factors that determine the choice of behavior.

Thus, if a person is alive, he is going to do something. There are a great many things he may do, but he can do only one thing at a time. What decides him? * Or what factors make him decide?

So now we have narrowed our field. We no longer have to worry about the mystery of life (I haven’t solved it, of course!), but we do have to study how people behave “as they do when they do.”

It seems to me that there are three general factors, or motives, which determine our choice of behavior, depending on the urgency of their demands. I’ll tell you briefly what they are.

First, the attitudes of approach and withdrawal are

* This is not bad English. I know that a person decides; but we have no words in our language to fit the situation.

based on an instinctive response either towards or away from our surroundings. Thus, the infant tends to avoid pain and accept food. On this response pattern, through training, our whole system of likes and dislikes is founded. The tendency to divide the world into approachable and avoidable things is instinctive, an action pattern, *but* the specific experience that each person interprets as pleasant or unpleasant is a personal one. I may like potatoes, you may like spinach; I may like Scotch, you may like rye; I may like Charlie McCarthy, you may not; and so on. It is clear, then, that as we grow up, at each moment our *attitude* towards a given thing is determined by our personal experience. Thus you like the United States and I like Canada; but don't make the mistake of thinking the reason for this difference is that we were born in our own countries. That's only the excuse. But more of this later.

Second, our appetites are six in number: hunger, thirst, elimination, rest, change and sex. Each of these appetites demands satisfaction if the person is to function adequately. They are all present at birth and, if things are arranged properly, the person can respond by some instinctive pattern. For example, the child is hungry at birth and if food is given he can suckle, swallow and digest. Thus he is provided with a series of action patterns which are adequate to satisfy each appetite if the environment is arranged by *someone else*.

As the child grows up he must learn to arrange the environment for himself. The instinct of swallowing remains more or less unchanged; the urge to eat re-

mains, but the behavior is infinitely altered—by learning. Just keep this in mind always: the motive is hunger, the need is food, but the desire or wish is for a beefsteak, ice cream cone or what have you. It is easy to be loose in our thinking. We often say, "I need a steak," when what we mean is, "I'm hungry and I've learned to like a steak, and so that would satisfy me." The same way with thirst, or rest, or sex.

Finally we have the emotions. This is a controversial subject, but let's go. The less complicated the structure, the better organized is the function. This is another way of saying that the lower in the scale of biological development, the more instinctive is the behavior. The insect is almost entirely an instinctive mechanism. The inherited patterns are wholly adequate for the individual to live in a fixed environment. If the environment changes, the individual dies, and hence the species may be lost. This has happened often in the history of evolution. Conversely, the higher in the scale, the less is the individual prepared to survive—without assistance. For this reason we would expect the human infant, as he grows up, to encounter many more difficulties and problems than the butterfly does—which is true. In order to help him meet these difficulties, nature provides a device like the supercharger on an airplane; when the plane is in need of extra energy, the pilot gives it an extra shot of gas. Nature does the same thing; and we call this device "emotion."

The capacity to emote is hence very useful. Instinctive behavior, being efficient, requires no pick-up, but when there is no pattern at hand to deal with a

situation, then the child has to *learn*; the impetus to learning is given by an emotional spur.

The situation that arouses an emotional response varies with individuals because we all get into different kinds of dilemmas. So *what* an individual emotes about is a personal affair. The child starts out by emoting, but by the time he has reached the adult stage his experience has sorted out a great many situations which arouse emotion; and for want of better terms we call them rage, hatred, envy, jealousy, awe, wonder, terror. But these terms, you know, are just tags like those put on parcels in the waiting room of a railroad station. In no way can you tell what is inside the bag by reading off the number on the ticket. Each one of us has his own pet peeve, love, irritation, favorite. So you see, although we all may start at scratch, by the time we move along the stretch we may be as different from the others in our emotional hand baggage as we are in our likes and dislikes. Remember, we all emote because we are human beings; but we emote the way we do because we are ourselves.

Well, Beth, this is certainly a long harangue to explain the simple statement that the child starts out in the world impelled to decide what to do, at any one time, by three motivating factors—attitudes, appetites and emotions—but all professors are long-winded. They are paid, you know, to take an hour's lecture and stretch it into a term's course!

Now, I know what you are saying to yourself: "What about all the social behavior—is it not as fun-

damental as eating and sleeping or getting mad?" The answer is—No!

There is no social instinct in man! and the sooner we realize this fact and organize our whole educational scheme on this basis, the better. It is just a biological accident that human beings are necessarily born into a social setting, first, because the mother is present, and second, because of the long period of infancy. But, and this is the crux of the situation, there are so many opportunities in the social setting for readily satisfying the above motives that the child grows into it and soon mistakenly accepts it as "fundamental." A child doesn't *need* a mother's care, a nurse can do as well; he doesn't *need* companionship, he likes it; he doesn't *need* a schoolroom, he'd rather do without; he doesn't *need* to be clean, punctual, honest, ambitious, industrious, decent, modest, courteous. These are but social patterns that are demanded of him, if he feels that he *wants* to be social.

Just take a look at our social activity. Try and find one single aspect of social life that is not simply an arrangement to make more pleasant an experience of the attitudes, appetites and emotions.

Take eating, for example. There is no *necessity* for having someone with you when you are eating. It often makes it pleasanter. Some people eat alone and like it; others feel they have to get together every second Monday and eat as a group, and they appear to like that. But how anyone in his right senses can imagine that a banquet, where they serve the same menu from Halifax to San Diego and subject the diners to the same verbal barrage from Vancouver to

Miami, can be interpreted as instinctive, is beyond me.

Or take our family organization. You hear people saying the family is the foundation of society; it is a divine assembly; it is a natural unit. It is nothing of the sort. The family, as organized in our modern civilization, is purely an artefact. It is kept together by an emotional appeal forced upon us by the economic and theological patterns laid down and perpetuated by man. Just because we like it and *think* it the best plan, that doesn't make it natural or instinctive.

Take our economic life, our system of education, our marriage laws, our club life—any social pattern—and you will find it is a *learned* pattern. Children love their parents because of the parents' behavior towards them—citizens obey the law because they want to—members gather together because they like to—and so on.

Now we can ask the question, Is war an instinct? The answer is No! The only instincts are those patterns of behavior inherited by the individual and which, at birth, satisfy the motives. If a child is hungry, he'll make every effort to satisfy the hunger; but fighting won't satisfy it. If a child sees a cookie in another child's hand, he'll snatch it and the other will snatch it back. But this is not fighting. The child does not snatch by instinct. This is a learned response; and furthermore, he has to learn that the biscuit is something he wants. A desire is always conscious. The motive that stimulates the desire is one of those that I have already discussed. It is well to

keep in mind that the child is continually seeking to satisfy one or more of these motives.

Now we have to turn to another question which follows on the first one: If war is not an instinct, is fighting ever necessary? Nations are like children. They grow and develop through experience and maturity. It seems too bad that individuals in groups lag behind the individual himself in learning intelligent social usages. There is, however, a ready explanation for this. Individuals in groups divide responsibility, in fact slough it off entirely; and hence, in the behavior of a group, may be seen behavior patterns that the individual himself would seldom select, such as lynching or rioting. One would expect that if an individual were sufficiently hungry, he would adopt any method to satisfy hunger; and from the biological point of view one would be justified. That is, if he did not eat he would starve; and he might choose some desperate method to avoid the starvation, even if this method led to injury or death. One might say that in this circumstance some form of violence would be justified.

One might ask then under what circumstances an individual would intelligently choose a dangerous procedure in order to satisfy a need. What are the human values that would justify recourse to arms or war?

When a group of individuals band together to form a society, whether it be a family, a club, a city, or a nation, you will agree, I think, that each individual has to give up certain satisfactions in order that the group as a whole may survive. The individual

must judge whether the satisfactions derived from group activities are sufficient to compensate for the individual satisfactions he gives up. It is difficult for a child to evaluate this choice because of the set patterns forced upon him by adults. A ready-made set of values is at hand. These are more or less accepted by the child or adolescent because of the emotional tie-up with some adults, as I mentioned before.

Under these circumstances this set of values is included in the training program, which is largely emotional in character, so that the child has very little opportunity of evaluating them in an intelligent way.

For example, there is the thing called honor. A child must be honorable to be socially accepted. It requires an educational method other than indoctrination, which is the common technique, to permit a child intelligently to examine some of the concepts that are ordinarily included under the heading of honor. When knighthood flowered, honor was chivalry of an exceedingly artificial kind. Tennyson's poems about King Arthur give us a reflection of the picture that was presented to the children of the knights of old. It is not to be wondered at that their idea of honor was interpreted as the senseless combats pictured in *The Idylls of the King*. One must read Mark Twain and Cervantes in order to view this social pattern in a truer light. But obviously children cannot do this.

Society has gradually discarded this extreme form of chivalrous behavior, but there is another convention somewhat similar to it—resentment towards be-

ing "called names." This undoubtedly is a carry-over from the days of chivalry. He is a hardy spirit indeed, today, who can ignore the insults that may be hurled at him in spite of the doggerel, which most of us have heard but never taken to heart, that "Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me." Many a war in past times has been precipitated by the thin skin of a ruler or a diplomat.

In some localities there are certain terms which, when applied, are called fighting words. "Liar," of course, is one of them. In any locality where you find a fighting word, you may rest assured the individuals who form that group are very sensitive about their shortcomings with respect to the trait castigated by the word itself.

And then there is the matter of glory. The American Indian knew that death on the battlefield was the height of his achievement. The cohorts of Spain were laying up glory for themselves because they were fighting for God and country. Their names, they knew, would ring down through history if they were sufficiently adventurous. A Mohammedan got a one-way ticket to eternal bliss if only he could kill what he called an infidel. And our monuments and our elementary textbooks indicate the level of modern appreciation of this form of social activity.

It seems to me that one beclouds the issue if one confuses honor and glory with the means by which one can attain them. Honor is principally integrity in its widest sense; and by no stretch of imagination is it necessary to start a fight in order to be honorable. Do you see, Beth, how easy it is to cloak other

motives by use of the smoke screen of honor, and how one can perceive in many a conflict of the past such values as human power, human greed and human frailty, all masquerading as honor or glory? There is no nation which has not transgressed in this particular manner.

However, there are a great many ways in which one can organize society. It would be a wonderful thing if social organization *were* instinctive, like the way we swallow our food, for then there would never be any conflict. But in so far as social organization is artificial, it is not to be wondered at that a great many societies have been organized differently, with different customs, different traditions, different methods. Each group has, I suppose, the right to organize within itself in a manner which satisfies the individuals. It is when one group attempts to superimpose its methods and customs upon another that a conflict arises. The conflict is inevitable; but has any one group the right of recourse to arms in order to change the patterns of another? I think you will agree that the answer is No. Individuals or groups have the right to present to others their plans, and to point out how much better those plans are than the others'; but each group has a right to evaluate such plans in the light of its own needs. Peaceful penetration is approved as long as it remains within the limits allowed by the group in question. Undoubtedly one group is at liberty to resist, by force if necessary, the forcible superimposition of behavior patterns. The choice, however, should always be made on the basis of the alternatives.

Would I rather be dead than live under the scheme that is being forced on me? Each individual has a right to make up his mind on this point. But it seems to me that it is precisely this choice that an individual should make intelligently, but seldom does. Remember, though, the choice is never made on an instinctive basis. It is always a highly conscious activity, the result of deliberation, and is influenced by the individual's experience and training. This experience is always colored by the shibboleths of the day. Today we hear a great deal about freedom. As if anyone could be free! An individual is free only if he is willing to deny freedom to himself so that he may live freely with others. No social group can extend freedom to its members. The more intelligently and peaceably the group can live together, the more restricted becomes the choice of activity of the individuals. You must be very careful, when teaching your children, that you don't, unthinkingly, use these shibboleths.

So, Beth, we have decided, haven't we, that fighting, or war, whether individual or group, is not an instinct? Also, that wars of aggression are never justified in a sane world; and that to take up arms in defense, you must be sure that the motive whose satisfaction you are defending is one that is fundamental, not forced on the individual by emotional indoctrination. In other words, if your child comes home and says that the boy next door has poked him, don't say to him, "Poke him back." There are more intelligent ways of solving the conflict that apparently has arisen. One alternative is to avoid the other child

because obviously there can be no satisfaction in his company. Of course, the child may be called a coward—so what?

A friend of mine recently was telling me about his boy, whom he noticed being hit by another lad. His boy walked away and came into the house. The father, of course, was all worked up because the child apparently had been cowardly, and he asked him why he had not hit back. The boy replied, "Why should I? He's dumb. He only got ten in arithmetic!" This boy's solution of the problem of aggression seems to me rather advanced for his age. I don't think the literal interpretation of turning the other cheek is a solution to the problem; but "bopping the other guy back" is even worse.

Now what about pacifism? It seems to me that there is no place in a community of individuals for the professional pacifist. Each one of us has a right to determine which alternatives we shall choose as a line of behavior. But in so far as we enjoy the privileges of a group, we also have certain responsibilities. It is for the individual to make his own choice in the matter, but too often the pacifist resorts to violence in order to get peace. The secretary of one of your university presidents has a perfect right, as he wrote in the *Saturday Evening Post*, to "sit this one out." The reader, though, has a right to question whether you can apply the circumstances of the dance hall to the matter of risking your life.

I have been trying to point out the scientific basis for evaluating war as a form of human behavior. Earlier I mentioned that there are two other fields

of study in which an attempt is made to analyze war: the philosophical and the religious. I don't think I need deal with these at any great length. If you accept the fact that our social behavior is learned and not instinctive, then obviously the evaluation of the philosopher, such as Nietzsche, is an interpretation of war in the light of social motives. This form of thinking is what we call rationalization, where, granting the premise that a warlike nation gains prestige, then for that nation war is inevitable because the whole educational policy, if dominated by such a philosophy, will tend to convince everyone that he must go to war as the only method of gaining honor and satisfying the very motives that have been forced upon him. Of course, if he can be taught that war is inevitable, then it is far easier to train him to accept it.

As for the religious field, war is often there presented as either a visitation of misery because of our shortcomings or sins (as one sometimes hears in a Christian country), or is incorporated, especially with death on the battlefield, into the religious orthodoxy, as in Japan. It does not require deep insight to realize that such an interpretation is more than arbitrary—though one must not, of course, belittle its effect. The emotional appeal through religion is very powerful. However, the almost universal acceptance of such an interpretation does not mean it is an instinctive form of response. On the contrary, to a student of human behavior it is just this universal social appeal that makes one skeptical.

In this connection it is wise to scrutinize very care-

fully the student of history who uses the phrase "history repeats itself" as a justification for anticipating the need for war. "History repeats itself" is just another way of saying that if an individual repeats an act often enough, it becomes a habit. But habits are not necessarily intelligent or constructive—witness, for example, alcoholism and drug addiction. History will repeat itself in any form, providing the motivation of the individual remains the same and the opportunities for satisfying it remain fairly constant; but in the case of alcoholism and drug addiction it is possible to change the goal idea of the individual and alter the environment so that these habits drop into disuse. In the same way it is possible to alter the goal ideas of groups; to alter the environment so that war as a form of behavior may drop into disuse.

This has been a long letter and I have touched briefly on certain topics which would take another long letter to describe. In brief, war is not necessary. Someday we can look forward to a generation of children who will grow up to be adults and discover that the fundamental needs of individuals can be gratified in a society without the use of violence to obtain them. War is not a visitation of God or a biological necessity, but a sign of human stupidity and arrogance. There are too many of us who are willing to accept the privileges of society without being willing to accept the responsibilities.

Please write me again, Beth, if there is anything in this letter you would like to ask about or disagree with.

Mother is very well. She is eighty-four now, as you

know; and it seems pathetic that when I was talking to her recently, she pointed out that this was the sixth war in her life in which someone close to her had been involved. I cannot think of anything more tragic than a memory such as this.

Yours,

Bill

II. PATRIOTISM

Dear Bill:

You may know a lot about psychology but you apparently know little about the duties of a housewife. The day your letter came, I had to postpone my ironing and baking to get through reading it. However, that doesn't mean I wasn't delighted to have it. I can't be certain that I agree with all the things you say, but that may be because I haven't thought them through yet. Some of your statements need digesting.

So war is not an instinct. I'm glad, because I shan't feel so fatalistic about it in future. It's a relief to be assured that if the next generation is trained in ways of peace, we shall come a little nearer to abolishing war. What a responsibility, though, for parents, and youth-movement people, and everybody who has anything to do with children!

By the way, doesn't it seem to you sometimes that children have more sense than grown-ups? How on earth do they lose it, then? Jane said the other day that she couldn't see why, when a country wanted to get somebody else's land, they rushed into it and spoiled it all first, with bombs and things. If they had

to have it, why didn't they think of a way that didn't cost so much money? So George told her that Hitler had thought of a way, until he got stopped—and he went on to explain that even if they did spoil the country, well, they took the people's money too, and that paid for putting up new buildings and fixing things up again. "But that's stealing," said Jane, "and taking the country's stealing too." "Oh," answered George, "when countries do it, it's called 'making war' and they're not put in jail for it. You can't put a whole country or a whole government in jail. But," he added (and this is the part I like), "they needn't think they can kid me about what it really is!" That kind of thing, from a child of seven and a high-school boy, makes me think we've got good material—if only we could train them right.

While you're in the vein, Bill, there's another thing I'd like you to write me about. Am I right in assuming that you think some of the ideals of our day are outworn? And if so, what are you going to substitute for them? I always felt that freedom was a misunderstood and misused term; but just today my boy Jack asked me what there was in "this patriotism." I was on the point of giving him the old story of majority and the sacred rights of individuals and the preamble to the Constitution, when I caught myself up because I realized I was doing what you said I should not—using shibboleths. So I am passing the buck to you. I told Jack that you would write us a letter and tell us what you think of patriotism.

I am glad to hear that your mother is well. I must

come up and pay a visit some time, but I think I would rather talk to her about other things than war.

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

Knowing you (and since you've asked for it), I don't expect you to take anything for granted that I tell you. All I'm interested in is a presentation of possible human-behavior patterns. There may be other interpretations. But at any rate, who am I to force you into any decision as to the opinions you hold? Rather, I ask you to make your decisions on a basis of your own judgment, instead of accepting blindly some of the things that have become encrusted with hoary tradition—so encrusted that most people are too lazy to scrape this off and see what is underneath.

About "this patriotism," as Jack calls it, I have written him a separate letter:* he will like it better that way. Whether Jack can understand what I am trying to get at, I don't know; but there is something further about patriotism that I do want to tell you.

Referring to my last letter, I would like to say a little more about the development of the self. You must keep in mind that all of us are trying individually to satisfy our attitudes and appetites and emo-

* See "By Way of Explanation," p. 9.

tions by whatever means are at our disposal. Whenever we are in the company of another person, we are trying to use that person as a means of satisfying one of these motives. But obviously the other person is trying to do exactly the same thing; and so each one is trying to influence the other one to fit into his plan or scheme. Oftentimes there is an impasse and then neither is satisfied. You can see this most clearly in the early social life of the child.

Two children meet for the first time, let us say. They are the same age, and the same sex, and the same size, and there is one wagon for them to play with. Each one wants the wagon and each will try to get it. This cannot go on, because their span of attention is not very long, so one of two things happens; one or other gets the wagon, or they both leave it. But if one gets the wagon and moves away with it, he has lost the companionship of the other child, which is more desirable than the wagon itself, and so they come together again and work out a plan whereby one child pulls the other in the wagon. This lasts for a little while until the pullee wants to become the puller, and then there is another fracas or impasse; but ultimately they work out a plan whereby one or other gets what he wants alternately. In psychological language we can say the one child tries to dominate the other and, if he succeeds, the other child submits; and so we have the condition of dominance and submission as forms of social behavior.

Whenever two people are together at any one time, one or the other must dominate, and the other must then submit. Whenever there is a group which has

any coherence, usually one person dominates and the remainder submit. In fact, groups remain *as* groups only if one member at one time dominates the group and directs their activities.

Dominance and submission, as you can see, are two *ways* in which the individual satisfies certain of his motives through social contacts. The important thing is the satisfaction; and if children are left alone to work out their own plans, then dominance and submission become social forms leading towards satisfactions. But you see, if for any reason special emphasis through social approval or disapproval is placed on one or the other of these forms, then the form becomes a goal in and of itself and ceases to be a plan or device. By this I mean that in the early stages dominance is a device through which an individual gets what he wants; but so too is submission; and the child will learn that both of these forms will lead to satisfaction.

But if, in the society in which he lives, special emphasis is placed on dominance, the child will quickly learn that dominance might be a thing in itself. Thus dominance becomes a derived goal or incentive, and the child in the social situation who seeks dominance for its own sake is satisfied only if he succeeds. You will, I think, admit that this is exactly what happens in our civilization. We are prone to teach our children that dominance is a good thing. We want leadership; we want them to head the class. We want them to shine at all the skills. We want them to get all the medals and all the prizes, to top the honor roll, and so on. Is it then cause for wonder that, by our own

teaching, we are raising a race of individuals whose present goal is not the satisfaction of their needs, but rather the will o' the wisp of dominance for which we have another name—power? There are some people who of course will say that the desire for power is instinctive; but this is an erroneous interpretation of human development. The desire for power is learned.

If we look a little more closely, we will find that many of our customs lend themselves to this faulty training. When we look at the means by which we dominate, we find that the most obvious is the use of force. It is easy to understand how a bigger child can dominate a smaller one because of the circumstances of greater strength. The ease with which he can dominate in this manner explains why power is important in our social life.

But there is another force which is called social pressure; and this can be more insidious than actual physical force. Social pressure is manifest when the society in which one lives places an arbitrary value on such qualifications as, first, *social position*, usually associated with blood, namely, blue blood—by which we get our class distinctions. What an admirable device this is of social dominance! The blood can only be inherited; and hence the ruling class remains intact as long as there is no miscegenation. Second, we have the *possession of material wealth* and the prestige-value of all that goes with it under our present economy—houses, automobiles, yachts, farms, ranches, estates. Third, certain *structural char-*

acteristics: which have to do with the satisfaction of sex—such as beauty, youth and vitality.

Now these various devices can be used as a means of dominance (or should I say misused?). But in so far as they are not acquired through the efforts of the individual specifically, there is need on the part of the individual who seeks power by their means to prevent any loss of these qualifications through a greater use of force. Thus snobbery and arrogance and intolerance are manifestations on the part of the individual that he is dominating through one of these agencies, and that he is fearful of their loss.

There is another way in which we can dominate and that is through the acquisition of skills of any sort. Skills, whether they be music or skating, surgery or baking, are acquired through individual effort. But in the acquisition of these skills the satisfaction has lain in the achievement alone: and this takes us back to our primary motives.

If we "know our stuff"—which is to say, if we are really skillful—satisfaction in dominance for its own sake is not present. There is then no necessity for any anti-social behavior such as snobbery, because the satisfaction is in the doing, not in dominance. Furthermore, the acquisition of these skills, and the satisfaction derived therefrom, in so far as there are wide differences in individuals, make it possible for an individual to submit to one whose skill is greater without any feeling of envy or jealousy or disappointment. Rather, one feels appreciation, admiration and emulation. Thus, in such an individual, dominance

and submission remain as devices by which his social life is made full and complete. There is no disgrace, no humiliation in submission; and there is no thrill in power or dominance.

Now, Beth, a child so raised is not going to be deluded into accepting some of the things that we hold rather strongly. He is not going to worry, for instance, about the superiority of the Nordic race. He is not going to worry whether the team will win or not. He is not going to feel the urge to build a taller building or amass a greater fortune just for the sake of having done so. He is not going to be led into mass movements of local pride or national "honor." He is going to learn to evaluate effort in the sense of its immediate and ultimate returns to himself, and will not be deceived into expending effort for the sake of nonessentials.

In Colorado, recently, I was having tea at the home of one of the professors of a university there, when his nine-year-old daughter bounced into the house, tossed her report-card into her father's lap, and said, "Daddy, I am last again." Her father showed no concern and the little girl noticed a look of surprise on my face which she misunderstood, because I wasn't surprised at her being last, but I was surprised at her attitude of acceptance and the father's tranquillity. She said, "Someone has to be last. It might just as well be me."

To me, this attitude was one of the most hopeful signs that I have seen in years. If only we can train children to form values earlier in life, so that they

will be able to avoid the crystallization that seems to occur when they begin to become adults! They copy our patterns, accepting without question patriotism, esprit de corps, loyalty to class, and thus limiting and circumscribing their social behavior for the rest of their lives.

Beth, if your youngsters come to you and ask whether you want them to be leaders or not, tell them they will lead if they deserve to—and that in the meantime, you are interested in their learning also how to be followers. It seems to me that democratic countries don't suffer from lack of leadership, but rather from a plethora of leaders. Everybody wants to be an executive. I suppose that is one reason why we have so many "get-together" clubs. It is a poor unfortunate person indeed who can't, in this day, be president of something.

Speaking of patriotism, though, Beth, I think it goes far deeper than what we hear or read of. A politician prating about patriotism is only a man trying to keep his job. It is often a sign of infantilism, like the coach who weeps when his team loses. Too often it is a sign of advancing senility—when only the past is important and the future seems too close at hand. Too vigorous a patriotism is a sign of insecurity—where the only virtue in the individual who is talking is the accident of his birth. Patriotism to me is pride in the development and organization of family or town or nation. The goal is the advancement of human happiness, which can come only through peace and the measures adopted by the community to

bring this about. When they are obvious there is no need for advertisement, and when they are lacking no protest can help.

Lest your darning suffer for this week, I had better close.

Yours,

Bill

III. THE NURSERY OF MARS

Dear Bill:

Received your last Epistle to the Americans. Everything you say sounds logical; but after all I think you are a hopeless optimist—or should I say hopeful? I wonder how long it's going to take for this Utopia of yours to arise?

It is interesting, however, the effect your letter had on Jack. He has always been rather serious, and now he has been talking about your three big words with the children on the street. I heard him telling them that tolerance meant putting up with George's tempers! Then George came home from basketball practice and got into the discussion. His idea was that co-operation really covered everything. If people could learn to want to co-operate, he thought, almost all problems could be settled that way. You might be interested to know, too, that Jack remarked, if his country got into a war he couldn't agree with, he would have to get out. He's very proud to have received such a grown-up letter.

While I have the opportunity, I want to find out about a good many things that have been on my mind for months. You will think I do nothing but soak up your letters without comment and hurriedly

ask for more. "Unlike *Oliver Twist*," I can hear you saying, "you don't even wait until you've finished your previous plateful." Well, perhaps I don't, but your explanations are helping me a lot; and let me assure you that these letters are going to be kept where I can refer to them.

There is a point, Bill, which you skimmed over in your first letter, and I'd like you to talk more about it—this business of hating people. Do you have to hate people in order to go to war with them? And do you have to work up hate in order to organize a nation efficiently to fight? Little Jane came home the other day and said she hated all Germans, and when I asked her why, she said because they were all nasty. She had listened, it seems, to some of the teachers at her school, whose sympathies are anti-Nazi. What am I to say to her about this sort of thing?

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

Now you have given me a job. I will try to be as brief as I can, though this is perhaps the most controversial point in modern psychology.

What, I wonder, do you think of as an emotion? (If you look back to my first letter, which I am glad you have kept, you will see that I mentioned the emotions as one of the three classes of fundamental mo-

tives.) Years ago William James of blessed memory sharpened up the discussion by asking the question whether, when a man ran away from a bear, he ran away and then got frightened, or was frightened and then ran away? Over this problem the psychologist worried like a dog worrying a bone, and with about as much success. And all this happened before the modern studies on children, which have been done almost entirely within the last twenty-five years.

Along about the beginning of the last war, a psychologist named Watson published as enlightening a piece of psychological inquiry as has appeared in some time. You will probably identify him with behaviorism, which is not his important contribution; but the piece I speak of, where he showed that it was possible to experiment on the emotions in children, is a long step in psychological progress. It is from his beginnings that most of the significant work on emotions has followed. He led the way.

There are a great many people today who look upon the emotions as a lower form of functioning than the intellect. Some say that the emotions are a direct inheritance of our animal ancestry; that in the "successful" evolution of man, the human animal must get rid of the emotions, so leaving behind his animal characteristics and emerging as a being of "pure intellect." This concept, of course, is wholly erroneous, as we shall see.

If we look at the lower animals, we find that the insect, for instance, emerges into adult life from the infant stage almost with one step. The behavior patterns that are necessary for the insect to carry on in

an efficient way are all pre-formed. He is instinctively an efficient operating organism. There is no need for any learning at all. If a catastrophe happens, the organism suffers because the patterns are rigid and cannot be changed. The higher you go in the scale of evolution, the fewer are the instinctive patterns; and in order to adjust as an adult, the individual must learn a good deal. This is a distinct advantage because it means that a learning organism is pliable and not rigid; and when changes occur in the environment, the individual can learn how to adapt without meeting some catastrophe.

On the other hand, very often, dependent as he is upon the capacity to learn, the individual is going to be in a dilemma. This dilemma can be described by saying that the organism, finding itself in a situation which is new, has no behavior pattern at hand to meet it adequately. Here is the ideal circumstance for learning. In fact, learning will not take place unless the individual *feels* that he is inadequate. Obviously, when things are running smoothly and efficiently there is calm and serenity, but when there is a crisis of some sort, then this serenity is disturbed.

When you are driving an automobile along a smooth road, everything is fine. But when you come to a steep hill, the motor begins to labor and you have to give it more gas. In some automobiles and airplanes there is that contraption, the supercharger, which gives the engine an extra spurt of fuel. In the organism, nature has provided exactly the same kind of thing—an emotion. The body is so organized that when the organism needs an extra fillip all the re-

sources are commandeered for the immediate emergency at hand. Furthermore, serenity is gone and excitement takes its place; so that an emotion may be said to arise when an individual feels inadequate to deal with a situation newly presented. It is manifested by an excitement and by a bodily up-surge. You can see from this discussion that the emotion is a useful thing and not a handicap, as some people think. If it were not for the emotions, the organism would never feel equal to taking on a new task—yet precisely there, of course, lies the phenomenon of learning.

The human infant is born with this mechanism ready for operation. Now, it can be understood that the child, helpless as it is, is going to meet new situations more frequently in the early years than later on. That is why children are, on the whole, more emotional than adults. The emotional life of the infant is not, however, as complicated as that of the adult, so we will have to find some explanation for the increasing complexity of emotional life as the child grows older.

The child, we may say, is emotionally potent, but the direction of his activity is going to be vague and uncrystallized. But as soon as the child begins to respond positively or negatively to its surroundings—that is, to accept or reject these new experiences which it is bound to have—we find the basis for an emotional differentiation. This response, which I have already mentioned, if you recall my first letter, is the basis for our emotional experience. If the child is faced with a dilemma, he can then choose whether

he is going to proceed towards whatever goal he had in mind and overcome the difficulty or problem. In this case the child is said to attack, and the emotional up-surge is a helpful adjunct to the child's resources. The more difficult the problem, the more intense the attack and excitement. So we can say that whenever the child is thwarted in his desires, an emotion is going to arise; and we can call this emotion *anger* for want of a better word.

On the other hand, if the child is presented with a situation which is so new and unfamiliar that there does not seem to be any point of attack, he will want to withdraw or escape from it. If this escape is thwarted, the emotional up-surge begins again in order to overcome this thwarting, and the child is then said to be emotional. This emotional experience is quite different from the former one, in that it is an escape rather than attack; and so we call this emotion *fear*, again for want of a better word.

Now it is this division into fear and anger which is the first crystallization of the emotional life of the child. It is, as you can see, a very general distinction. There is no specific object of either fear or anger at birth. Anger arises when the individual wants something badly enough to exert himself for it; and fear arises when the individual is prevented from withdrawing from a situation which he has interpreted as unfamiliar or undesirable. These two types of emotion form the basis for all later emotional experiences. The later differentiation depends on the experience of the individual. The "object" of the emotion, which, of course, is the obvious point of em-

phasis for the individual himself, depends on the circumstances of the environment. It is not necessary for the child to interpret accurately what, in the environment, has caused either fear or anger. All that is necessary, in order for a specific emotion to be tied up with a specific object, is for him to believe it is the thing he thinks it is.

For example, if the child is prevented from picking up a butcher knife and wants it very badly, he may display his anger against the mother or nurse, and "blame," to use a common expression, the mother or nurse for the frustration. Only later does he learn that the inaction prevented him from doing himself injury. Also, the child may become angry at his tri-cycle when it is caught in a hole in the sidewalk and he cannot extricate it. He becomes angry at the tri-cycle, when, of course, the anger should be directed against his own inadequacy, if against anything. With fear, it is the same. In so far as fear arises in a novel situation, it is more than likely that the child is going to select something in the environment as the "cause" of the fear. That is why, in so many children, there are fears of very common objects such as cats and balloons, or of colors. The fixating, as we say, of the emotion upon a particular object is not a fundamental relationship, but rather an accident of the individual's experience.

You have asked me about hatred, which is one of the emotional experiences of most adults, and I can now define it very briefly by saying that hatred is intense anger directed against a person. Since it includes a social implication, for purposes of clarity

one should never use the term hatred when directed against other than social beings. That is, it is wrong to say that you hate opera. You can, however, hate an opera singer.

As the child grows up, these two fundamental emotional types are going to appear in a great many situations. For instance, if the thwarting happens to be associated with the affection of the mother, as may occur when another child is born in the family, we have the emotion called jealousy. Later, during adolescence, this thwarting will occur in connection with a person of the opposite sex; and this we call jealousy, too. We do so because of the inadequacy of the English language. These two jealousies are entirely different, in spite of the interpretations of the psychoanalysts. In the very young child there is no evidence whatever that jealousy has a sexual component; none, that is, unless one wishes to misinterpret the childhood behavior.

Now to expand a bit on the growth and development of emotionally tinged objects in the environment. I must emphasize the fact that the objects selected by the individual need not be an accurate evaluation of the circumstances in the environment that caused the thwarting. You are aware of how frequently we are in error when we try to solve a problem. If the problem is perfectly clear, the solution eventually emerges, but our failures are frequently due to the fact that we have misinterpreted the problem or difficulty. But as far as emotional development is concerned, accuracy is not a necessary component, for in anger we are prone, having made our decision

and interpreted the situation, to attack more or less violently the problem *as we see it*.

There is another interesting characteristic of the emotions to consider. You will say, "If the emotions are as useful as you pretend, why is it that when you're in an emotional state your efficiency is often reduced rather than increased?" This, of course, is quite true; but again we have to be careful in our analysis; and again we are confronted with the lack of the proper words in English to indicate different shades of meaning. When the child begins to "emote," if one may use that expression, he is under the influence of some motive. In other words, he wants something and he is prevented from getting it—and so he attacks. In the initial stages of the attack he is more efficient than before, but as he sees the result of his attack, whether it seems to bring him closer to his goal or whether it seems to be getting him nowhere, the situation changes by this very factor, and he feels more thwarted or less, depending upon the degree of success or failure. If he feels more thwarted he is going to try something else, and then the gathering together of his forces, which is the bodily emotion, begins to be dissipated in more than one direction instead of being directed towards just one form of attack. When this dissipation takes place (which means that the whole body, and not only that part which is attacking the problem, begins to participate in the extra energy), the behavior becomes confused and erratic and inefficient. The child appreciates that he is getting farther and farther away from the goal, so the excitement increases and there is

mental confusion as well. At this stage, the individual is less efficient, and he becomes increasingly less efficient the longer this kind of attack goes on.

In speaking of anger and rage, it would be well to confine the word "anger" to the first stage of the emotional experience and to use the word "rage" to indicate the later stages of the process. So we can say, then, that anger is a useful and efficient function, and that rage is an inefficient and handicapping function. The point at which anger merges into rage is, of course, difficult to establish. You can see, however, that in any training program, if one can teach the child to recognize this transition stage, and to learn that beyond it lie disappointment and further frustration, then through practice the child learns to control rage but to stimulate anger, because anger is the basis of ambition, initiative, aggressiveness, achievement, enthusiasm. (Notice, all of these words are used in the English language to indicate the type of person who has learned to use this initial stage of attack as a means of learning.) If children are left alone, they will learn to control this behavior pattern. All children have temper tantrums. If they are allowed to appreciate that a temper tantrum gets them nowhere, then gradually they learn to keep their anger experiences within the bounds of efficiency. If, however, they are able to induce people, their parents or nurses or teachers, to give in to them when they become enraged, they will use rage to get what they want. So in some children who have been brought up in this manner temper tantrums, instead of decreasing, increase in frequency.

There is one other fact which must be kept in mind; and this is very important. Anger, as I have said above, always arises in a situation in which the individual is willing to attack or accept. This is the attitude of approach, and is interpreted as pleasant. Nothing is more pleasant than anger; and by the same token, nothing is more pleasant than rage—if you don't have to accept the consequences of its inefficiency. I think you will agree that at times you have felt how glorious it would be if you could just lose your temper and throw things, and not have to suffer for it. (I'll come back to this point.)

Human beings are very suggestible. In other words, they are ready to respond to the influence of other people. I discussed this briefly before, when I pointed out that the human being is the most interesting object in the universe to another human being. This means that in the emotional field, as in other fields, it is easy, especially through training, to suggest to individuals objects that have emotional value. So, if one can arouse in another a situation which appears to be thwarting, one can hence arouse anger; and that is what we call inspiration. Or we can go further and arouse rage. This is relatively easy to do because it is a pleasant kind of emotion and children especially welcome this kind of stimulation. It is taking an unfair advantage of children to use an emotion as a means of directing their behavior. In any rational scheme of discipline, the use of emotion is taboo—the reason being that it is difficult to control once you have started it off. For our emotions are individual

and intimate, and can never be shared with others except through our behavior.

Suppose you wish your child to do something, and you start saying to him, "You are a sissy," or "You are a coward." You may then induce in that child a form of behavior which is divorced from the situation itself—which is, moreover, dependent only on your interpretation—as a basis for his activity. In this way it is easy to crystallize in a child's mind certain objectives which he will incorporate into his emotional repertoire; and then through practice the appearance of one of those objectives will call forth the emotion. So you can stimulate children to be angry at Jews, Communists, the opposing team, the policeman, anybody. And as these emotions become more unreasonable they turn into hatred.

Such emotional fixations have no basis in the actual experience of the child. Rather, they are caused by the vicarious suggestions of adults. Now you can see how, in the hands of an unscrupulous individual, by merely tying up one object with another that already has an emotional fixation, there may be released an energy and activity wholly out of proportion to the individual's previous motivation or desires. Such a person may multiply this force ten or a thousandfold by influencing crowds instead of just one person. He may control the direction of this energy to suit his own purposes. Politicians make use of this device over and over again.

Today we are in the midst of a wholesale orgy of emotional stimulation. We are at war. We have assumed that we are being thwarted from reaching our

goal. It does not matter at the moment what that goal is. We have interpreted the situation as a thwarting; and, as I mentioned above, whether or not the interpretation is accurate does not matter. The more we bolster it up through irrelevancies, the more likely it is to be inaccurate. If we are seriously concerned with the thwarting, then our attack should be within the limits of anger and efficiency. Whenever we get into a rage, not only do we become inefficient physically, but our mental confusion inhibits our clear vision and judgment. Thus, whenever a nation at war descends to the seeming necessity of arousing hatred, one begins to question whether it is an efficient mechanism in the first place; whether perhaps this hatred is not aroused to prevent the person so aroused from seeing more clearly the issues that are involved. Hatred is a circumscribing and inhibiting behavior pattern because it is always a recourse to rage: and rage prevents the individual from solving the problem for himself.

Now you see how I would answer the questions that you asked. The first one was, "Do you have to hate people in order to war with them?" This question, Beth, can't be answered by a simple No. As I pointed out in my first letter, war is a stupid, futile solution to any problem. Thus, it might be said that in order to make war it is necessary to become enraged so one can't see clearly how stupid the whole thing is. I would therefore say that war and hatred go together. But if a nation has clearly defined the issues involved, and has come to the momentous decision of using force as the only possible means of

solving a problem (which tragically enough may be necessary today because of a lack in education and maturity in our adult world), then hatred is not only unnecessary but is a sign of weakness and, by implication, a sign that the war itself is perhaps not justified.

I cannot emphasize too much how important it is for us, as parents today, to avoid at any cost the stimulation of hatred in our children towards anybody. These hatreds often survive infancy because there is so little opportunity for correcting them. The next generation, our own children and their children; these are our hope that the hatreds of past generations will die—these are our hostages to peace. As adults we have very little influence today; the hatreds that we are manifesting now were let loose generations ago. But whatever our own behavior and whatever we feel are our own responsibilities now, we can raise our children so that they themselves can arrange their emotional lives to suit a more rational and sensible society.

You may ask, Is this possible? And I say most emphatically, Yes. If your child comes to you and says, "Do you hate Hitler?" you can say, "No. I disapprove of Hitler. I disapprove of what he stands for, but as far as hating him, no." Because, after all, hatred simply gives you a feeling of righteousness and adds nothing to the ultimate solution of the much bigger problem of a wider peaceful social organization. Isn't it amazing how many children you find who say they hate the Jews, they hate the Negroes, they hate the Japanese, they hate the Catholics, and so on; yet in

many cases they have never met even one such person?

The next question is, Do you have to work up hate to organize a nation efficiently to fight? The answer here, of course, is emphatically No, because with hatred one becomes inefficient. To stimulate one to the point of efficiency, Yes. To create enthusiasm, Yes. But not hatred. There is another reason why this question should be answered in the negative. After all, we hope that some day the war will end. In the past, hostilities have always ceased; and the aftermath is more important than the hostilities themselves. Whether we are victorious or defeated, there is enough tragedy at the moment without guaranteeing that the psychological factors shall continue. One can't help decrying the uselessness and disgrace of the Boer War; but at least one can pay tribute to the attempt of both victors and victims to assuage the emotional consequences of that conflict. The same may be said to a degree about your relations between the North and South, for you will admit that even today there are still vestiges of the emotional outrages of that war.

After all, in all matters of discipline, the important factor is to see that neither in the discipliner nor the disciplined is there an emotional hangover after the incident is closed. This can only be accomplished if the discipliner approaches the situation without personal emotional prejudice. And so I conclude by saying that hatred has no place in peace or in war. It is possible to train a generation of people who will leave their hatreds to their infancy, and will

carry into adult life enthusiasm, predilections, varied tastes and individual cultural standards; whose maturity will be characterized by sanity and tolerance, rather than by hysteria and bigotry.

This seems to be the point at which I should say something about racial characteristics. There are some who say that each race has certain social characteristics which are instinctive and ineradicable. You will have surmised by now, Beth, that such a statement would be impossible to accept in the light of how I interpret the development of social behavior. I think all races start out equally under the influence of the three classes of motives that I have already mentioned. Their social behavior is entirely a product of their environment. Thus, socially, a German infant, a French infant, an American infant and a Hottentot infant are potentially the same. Since, however, they are going to be under the influence not only of their physical but their social environment, their choice of behavior is going to be governed in a great measure by their social heritage; by the customs, traditions, prejudices, ambitions and ideals of the group. All this twaddle being forced on the German people today is simply a more or less clumsy attempt to indoctrinate the race. It is even a question whether there are intellectual differences of racial origin. At any rate, it has served the purpose of leaders from time immemorial to ascribe to their particular race certain characteristics, usually of a dominant nature, and to deny them to other races. At the present day there is a great deal of loose thinking in the lay mind with reference to this topic. The German is made

out to be fundamentally bestial, arrogant, cruel and belligerent. And of course we ascribe to ourselves all the virtues of charity, sympathy, humility and peacefulness.

Now, Beth, this is just arrant nonsense. The racial characteristics one pretends to discover are emphasized or minimized for some ulterior purpose, and can be changed in a generation if the social environment is propitious. There is no characteristic, good or bad, that is the sole prerogative of any one race. For purposes best known to themselves, the leaders of various races have, through emotional techniques, stressed the racial characteristics that have been developed through the course of time; and they have been able, because of the unthinking acceptance of their claims, to use this subterfuge to create dissension. Today, the German people are being subjugated by force, mind you, and are asked to don the mantle of arrogant belligerency. This is not because they are Germans or Nordics. To accept such a view at its face value and say that the German nation, when interpreted as a group of individuals, are instinctively what Hitler would have us believe, is to miss the whole point. If you wish another example of how these pseudo-racial characteristics have been employed for the aims of a small group of individuals, read again, in *The Conquest of Granada*, how the Spaniards were inspired to a pitch of fury in their attempts at exterminating the infidels whom they considered an inferior race.

It seems too bad that at the present time we are being propagandized to hate the German race because

they are what they are. Surely, if we are consistent and believe that the German is fundamentally what we are asked to believe, then there is only one reasonable outcome of this present conflict, and that is the total extermination of all Germans so that they can breed no more. Ancient Rome was at least consistent, but you know what happened to the Roman Empire. No; let us expend our emotion in the direction of enthusiasm for our ideals and their defense, rather than direct it towards individuals who happened to be born in another section of the world's surface, and whose potentialities are exactly the same as ours.

I think, Beth, that this is still a voice crying in the wilderness; but at least we can avoid using a false scientific conclusion to aggravate our fears.

Yours,

Bill

IV. IN PLACE OF TERROR

Dear Bill:

Don and I read your letter over together last night and it made us feel pretty sad, because it seemed to us that if what you said was true about emotional training, we have a long way to go. Just on a dare, we sat down and put on paper the names of people we didn't like (or at least of those persons with whom we've associated the term "hatred") and what a list it was! But you know, Bill, as you say, whether it's because of our training or not, it *is* nice to be able to "get a hate off" on somebody and get it all off your chest. I suppose that isn't the thing to do—but it's hard to be sane in these days, isn't it?

In your last letter, you just mentioned fear. This seems to me as important as anger, and I wonder if you could tell us a little more about it?

I suppose my point of view is bounded by my family and my friends, but I can't help wondering what I would do if in two years' time George had to go to war. I can't help wishing that the airplane had never been invented, because the air corps is where the younger ones seem to be needed; and what chance have they? I am not going into the business of how we women bear the children and go through what

the novelists call the "Valley of Death." That's all in a day's work, and I think there is too much emphasis placed on it anyway. What gets me down, though, is the memories of nursing, and changing, and washing, and putting to bed, and the first words, and the scraped knee, and the broken toy, and all the commonplace things that, no matter what happens, I would not miss for anything. But to feel that the culmination of the whole business is what would be to me a senseless and futile end, is something I can't understand.

Last night Jane woke up and cried. When I went in to her, she was trembling, and she said, "Will they drop bombs on us, Mummy?" This startled me—though I managed not to show it, I think. Isn't it amazing what these youngsters think about without our knowing it? What must it have been in Spain and Finland for those poor children—and what might happen now in places that have become so familiar to us, like London, Paris and Berlin? What can we do about fear?

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

The reason I did not go on to discuss fear as an emotion in my last letter was that I was afraid you might get bored. However, you seem to be a bear for punishment, so I am going to take a shot at describing this emotion too.

Remember what I said in my last letter, that the child starts out capable of emoting and that very soon his emotional behavior is going to be divided into two distinct types, anger and fear?

It is well to remember, as I said before, that the child emotes but does not emote towards any specific thing. Or, in simple language, the child at birth is afraid of no particular object, but is fearful. Fear is the emotion aroused when the child, in a dilemma, attempts to withdraw and this withdrawal is more or less prevented. Obviously, the thwarting determines the intensity of the emotion. As I pointed out, the situation that calls forth the fear response is one which is unfamiliar, new, or so suddenly presented that the child has no time to appreciate whatever familiar elements there are in it. One would expect, then, that the child would experience fear quite frequently in the first few years; and on the whole this is true.

In homes such as yours, where you look after your children so well that the surroundings are fairly stable and consistent, one can eliminate a great many of these fear situations. Of course, if her old Uncle Joe, for instance, comes and grabs little Jane up, and throws her to the ceiling and catches her on the way down, she is going to be afraid. (Sometimes I think the Uncle Joes of the world should be thrown up to the ceiling and not caught.) However, in so far as no situation can be entirely new, the child is going to remember some elements and, in interpreting the fear experience, is going to fix upon that familiar element as the thing that caused the fear. And so

later on the child will withdraw or try to escape from the situation in which this familiar element appears. That is why so frequently a very commonplace object stimulates fear in children; and of course, unless they learn to be accustomed to its presence, it will persist as a fear-inducing object, sometimes throughout life.

The child is not born afraid of the dark, but if the dark, which is a familiar experience to the child, is associated in conversation or otherwise with the fear experience, the child may pick on the dark as the cause—and then we say the child is afraid of the dark. In brief, ignorance is the basis of all fear. The only person who is not afraid is one who is omniscient. You can draw your own conclusions from this as to how many people there are in the world who are fearless!

Just as anger is a stimulating experience leading to more efficient behavior, so also is fear, because obviously it serves well for our survival. We *should* be cautious of unfamiliar situations; and then, if our caution is justified, an escape is necessary and it is well that our supercharger-effect should be in action. So anger and fear are supplementary one to the other, the one making efficient our aggressive actions and the other making efficient our withdrawal responses.

There is, however, this difference between the two—that whereas anger is always a pleasant experience, fear, on the other hand, is always unpleasant. Just as in anger, though, where the efficiency turned into an inefficient phase which we called *rage*, so in fear, when the individual appreciates that his escape is

unsuccessful or might be, the emotion is intensified, the organic upsurge spreads, the behavior is inefficient, the confusion increases and the unpleasant aspect is magnified; and then we call the emotion *terror*, than which there can be no more unpleasant experience.

The training of children with reference to this emotion is quite different from that of the training in anger. In anger, remember, I told you to leave the child alone; but in fear we can't do that, because we wish to prevent at all costs the child's being driven into an experience of terror. Nothing, perhaps, leaves a more indelible imprint than such an experience. It is seldom that a child in our everyday civilization is subjected to a terrifying experience, because usually there is someone around to prevent such happenings.

Fear, as I said above, is very common in children. The proper treatment is for the adult to show only calmness and serenity in the face of the same situation which is presented to the child. In other words, if the child is afraid, the mother, or nurse, or father, being with the child and obviously in the same situation, maintains his poise and calmness and shows by example that the situation is familiar—that to the parent at least there is nothing of a fear-inducing character.

There should not be too much sympathy; and ridicule and shame are, of course, absolutely taboo. If it is warranted, one can discuss calmly what the child saw as unfamiliar or new; but it seldom serves any good purpose to discuss the matter during an emo-

tional crisis of any sort, because the child, having selected the particular thing she thinks is fearsome, cannot be argued out of it while under the influence of the emotion.

It is quite common for children about three or four years old, some younger, to have nightmares. Nightmares are usually "terror": and invariably the child awakens.

There is nothing more startling, perhaps, in the experience of a young couple than suddenly to hear a piercing shriek from the baby's cot. The mother usually leaps up—and if it is the first child, the father does too. They dash to the cot, to discover the child trembling with fear and usually awake. Now the proper procedure under these circumstances is to be perfectly calm. You can put on the light in order to make sure there isn't anything that would obviously cause the fear; but when you have diagnosed that it is a nightmare, turn off the light to show that you are not afraid—and perhaps to hide your initial startle. Then make sure the child is really awake, turn her over in her bed, tuck her in and say good night. (It is well also to give her a drink of water, or you will have to get it later when she calls; so this will save some trouble.) Then, having gone back to bed, stay there. If your procedure, Beth, has been to take the child into your own bed or to put on the light and examine every corner of the room to demonstrate there is no lion or bear or bogey man, all you have been doing is to indicate that you too are in some doubt as to their presence; and you will start in the

child a habit of wanting to come into your bed or crying out at night which may persist for some time.

What the child wants is assurance; she does not need sympathy or arguments, but the calm presence of someone in whom she has confidence. This allays the fear or terror until she can examine the surroundings more critically. The next morning you can discuss calmly with your child the fact that she dreamed there was a bear chasing her, and that any sensible person, having been chased by a bear, would be frightened, so there is no harm in it and certainly no shame connected with it. "Usually when you have such a nightmare you wake up yelling; you cannot help that; I am in the same room with you or in the next room, always, and ready at hand when you call, and I will look after you"—so speaks the mother. I don't think it is necessary for me to say that you shouldn't argue that it is silly to be afraid of bears. After all, there is nothing silly in an emotion. It is just a fact.

Just as in anger, one must be very careful not to use fear for an ulterior purpose. Since fear is a withdrawal or escape reaction, there is always the temptation to use it as a basis of negative discipline. In other words, if you can sufficiently arouse a fear concerning any object, then you may be sure a child will not touch that object or go near it. This is the basis of the development of taboos in primitive society. But this technique acts as a boomerang, because, if the fear remains unallayed, the child later finds it impossible to adjust in an opposite direction. I may say that a good deal of the training in connection with

sex in our civilization is associated with fear; whence the really tragic number of adults who find it impossible to adjust adequately to the appetite of sex after marriage. This is but one example of the irrational use of fear as a discipline. You should never tell a child there is a bogey man in the attic, or that if he goes on the street the policeman will take him to the police station, or that if he is naughty you will give him to the rag man, or any such silly thing. I merely mention these, Beth; I know you would not use such devices.

However, just as in anger, there are unscrupulous people who will use this emotion as a means to an end. Fear, indeed, is even more popular as an influencing device than anger. You see, one way of escaping from a situation is to destroy it. This, of course, is particularly true of human individuals. You can escape from such situations by running away from them or by getting rid of them; and so down through the ages we can discern the use of fear for ulterior purposes. Once fear has been aroused, there is justification for acts, on the part of individuals, mobs or states, that outrival those of the lower animals, so called, in cruelty and ingenuity. Take for example the burning of witches, the tortures of the Inquisition, and, if we are honest, the modern forms of so-called capital punishment. I think it would not be difficult for you, as you say you did with hatred the other night, to take a piece of paper and write down all the occasions you can remember from experience in which fear was induced in an effort to govern your behavior. Recall the teacher who held

over us the continuous threat of bodily injury? Do you remember the preacher who lovingly painted the perils of damnation? Do you remember the time your brother threw you into the water and said that that was the best way to learn how to swim—and how we pulled you out and could not get you near the water again that summer?

You may ask why, when once you are all calmed down, you can't say to yourself that fear was unreasonable—that you must "get over it." You see, in so far as fear is aroused by the unknown, when you begin to analyze the situation all *you* can recall of it are the familiar aspects; and so it often helps to discuss your fears with other people, providing you don't bore them to tears. But with children a frank discussion of fears (never in public, though) often serves to allay them. Of course, if a great deal of sympathy is extended to a child who is afraid, he may begin to use fear deliberately as a basis for getting sympathy. Children find this an excellent device, if used intelligently, to obtain special privileges and often to avoid deserved consequences.

There is another aspect of fear which I am going to touch on: if properly handled, fear, just as anger, can be made the basis for the development of a mature emotional equipment. As I pointed out, fear is fundamentally unpleasant; but as the child grows up and becomes more skillful in handling situations, the new elements of the surroundings become more fascinating than the old and familiar. And so we see emerging the curious paradox of an individual voluntarily placing himself in a fear situation, which we

commonly call *danger*, and deriving a thrill from the feeling that the situation can be controlled through the individual's skill; that at any time while the situation is still under control, the individual can escape unscathed. We call this adventure; and I suppose there is no more thrilling form of human experience. In order to enhance the thrill, at the height of the experience there must always be a slight doubt as to whether the individual can successfully escape or not.

You can observe this mechanism developing in young children. There is one situation in childhood which is available for all children to practice the thrill of adventure: the danger of falling. Children enjoy climbing about, and their greatest thrill is to get in the most precarious positions from which they can just extricate themselves with difficulty. The thrill of the roller-coaster, loop-the-loop, flying, skiing, mountain climbing—all are instances of this thrill. Man cannot fly, and hence this situation can never be adequately adjusted to. It is always an experience to be avoided. When you are a free agent in the air, there is nothing you can do but fall, so this is always potentially fear-inducing. When a child climbs, he is deliberately placing himself in a situation which will be fearful; but as long as he feels he can avoid falling, the closer he comes to that contingency the more thrilling will be the experience. You remember the fun we had climbing into the loft at Uncle Walter's barn near Rochester. You can recall the thrill there was in taking off, and the feeling of consummation after you lit in the hay on the barn floor below.

The handling of these adventure situations in early childhood is a delicate problem. If we will only recognize that without interference we can trust the judgment of children, there will emerge the caution that arises out of the fear experience itself. Then children will gauge their spirit of adventure by their appreciation of their own skills. If, however, the parent is too much on the alert to safeguard the child against all possible fear incidents, the child comes to depend too much on the parent's ability to extricate him. Caution is then supplanted by foolhardiness. Therefore it is not well so to sterilize the environment of a child that he never feels himself in danger. Obviously, however, the environment must be such that there is no challenge within it which, through lack of knowledge and skill, the child might accept and suffer an injury out of proportion to the challenge itself. In every nursery-school playground, for instance, you find a "jungle gym," a device which is safe but also of such a nature that the child can thrill to its potential danger.

And now we come to another aspect of fear: the question of bravery and cowardice. I have intimated that there is no such thing as a fearless person. Perhaps I should modify this by saying that an individual who knows nothing at all might be fearless because he did not know enough to be afraid. Fortunately, however, there are so few such persons that we need not take them into consideration.

Throughout the history of the human race, an entirely false value has been placed on physical bravery. If we were to examine into acts of heroism, we

would discover that the incidents as described in the citations were frequently misinterpretations of the actual facts. Oftentimes an individual will go unwittingly into a situation that turns out quite unexpectedly to be dangerous. In his attempt to escape he may find himself thwarted, but, depending upon the motivation at the moment, and having no time to examine the situation more critically, he pitches upon a familiar element and attacks rather than escapes. His emotion is changed from fear to anger; and later, having emerged successfully through good luck or good management, he finds himself to be a hero.

If bravery is anything at all, it is a characteristic of an individual who enters upon a situation he knows is dangerous, and in which he feels fear. The brave man is the one who is afraid. However, just because of the apostrophizing of the brave man, the obverse attitude, the contempt for the coward, has taken hold of most people. How many times a big strong father has tried to encourage his son to take medicine or eat spinach or learn to swim by first appealing to his cultivated desire for bravery, saying, "Be a big brave man," and then losing patience and hoping to shame him with, "Don't be a coward!" Neither bravery nor cowardice is a device for training a child to control his behavior under the influence of fear. Ridicule and shame simply tend to make the child more and more secretive about his fears and, by this very token, to perpetuate them. Exploits of bravery, if held up as examples for his behavior, often serve to develop a feeling of inadequacy which too tends to be secretive, and leads to perhaps more unhappi-

ness in the world than anything else. The child should be raised to formulate his own values in connection with fear. He will learn the thrill of adventure; but he will also learn the benefits to be derived from caution and good judgment. A free choice in this matter will develop a mature individual.

There is one aspect of this training that is neglected most of all. That is the aspect of fear as it pertains to our social behavior. It is most commonly spoken of as moral courage. At birth, of course, children are individualists, in that they are non-social; but then, as soon as they begin to fit into any group, they learn the assurance that accompanies sameness. The familiar experience of people is their backlog against experiencing unfamiliarity. And so more and more the child, and later the youth, is reluctant to do anything different from what the group does. We tend to talk about the erratic behavior of the adolescent. Truth to tell, though, there is, on the average, no one more fundamentally reactionary than the adolescent girl or boy. To be different is to be uncomfortable.

Just as we make provision for the child to enjoy the thrill of adventure in the physical realm, so we must make equal, if not more, provision—because it is less dangerous—for the child to be adventurous in the realm of ideas and imagination. A child is not born with imagination, he develops it; and he develops it through the practice he gets in stepping off the beaten paths and exploring realms of ideas that are new and fearsome. In our civilization, we have succeeded far beyond the wildest expectations of the

most complacent in training our children against such adventurous thinking. Hence the mediocrity of most of us. Hence the reason why that rare, that lucky, person who has had an opportunity of learning this form of adventure, shines out like a light on a pinnacle. For every thousand of us who are brave (or at least have the reputation for bravery) in the physical realm, there is only one who has learned to be brave in the realm of ideas.

Surely, if we take such pride in our intellect, we should have as a goal the training of children in so-called moral or ideational courage. This can be accomplished only if we ourselves as parents have learned this kind of adventure. If we have confidence in the caution—often called timidity—of youth, then we can with a degree of tolerance accept and certainly listen to the flights of fancy which the child is bound to indulge in. But if we start calling these flights of fancy “lies,” as so many of us do, then the child withdraws within himself and becomes suspicious of this kind of adventure. Or if, on the other hand, we ridicule those flights, the same thing will happen. But often, going even beyond these methods of training, we ourselves become afraid of the ideational adventures of the adolescent, especially. I wonder if the people who condemn those who are searching for the truth in the fields of religion and government and ethics know that with their condemnation they are expressing their own lack of maturity, the pitch of development of their own fears in those fields? Surely, if we believe in any concept, whether it be Christianity, or capitalism, or social credit, or

whatever it is, we should not be afraid that any suggestion or idea contrary to our own will storm our bastions. It is only when we feel our own fortress is weak that we must condemn uprisings which may in time succeed in overpowering us.

And so, when our children question whether there is a God, or whether Communism is not perhaps a good thing, or whether free love is not perhaps better than hypocrisy, or whether birth control perhaps is justified, we should not be startled or fearful at these ideas—unless, of course, we feel that perhaps these ideas have more in them of truth than the opinions we ourselves hold. In other words, Beth, when we assume the task of training children in control of fear, we must be very careful, because, through the indirect appeal of an example, we may be making of our children the timid creatures we ourselves are.

Now again, under the stress of international catastrophe, there are people who are deliberately attempting through indirect means to arouse fear in order to control the behavior of us all. We must be careful that the situations painted for us in all the contemporary horrors and gruesomeness are not just smoke screens, really. For you see, Beth, the thing you are afraid of can never actually be depicted. One should be suspicious, always, if the picture is painted in such clear colors that one can see all its implications.

If that is true, then of course we need not be afraid. Supposing, Beth, that some day Jack were standing with a bunch of the boys on the side of a strange body of water, and someone suggested, "Let's

go in for a swim." I think you would like Jack to say, "No, it's dangerous to jump in unless you know where the bottom is." And if they called him a coward, you'd like him to be able to reply, "Yes, I guess I am a coward, if a coward is a person who will not jump into strange places when he does not know whether he can get out again." Surely you would rather have that happen, than have Jack come home and boast that the boys dared him to jump in, and that he did.

This, in essence, is moral courage. And so too with war. It is not brave to go to war, necessarily, nor is it cowardly to stay out. I hope it will not be necessary to go through what happened during the last war. (Remember the spectacle of idiotic women, standing on street corners, handing out white feathers to men in civilian clothes?) It seems to me that we all have to ask ourselves what our contribution to any community should be. We have a responsibility, undoubtedly; but the issue is never as clear-cut as, "Am I afraid to go or not?"

If we are to maintain the democracy of which we boast, then the responsibility we are willing to accept should not be one that is forced upon us. If it is necessary to use force, then democracy in just that measure has failed; and what is true of the individual is true obviously of the community. The question of entering war or refraining from war should never be placed on emotional grounds. The issue is far deeper. As I have intimated in my first letter: What sacrifices is an individual willing to make to maintain what he considers a satisfactory status quo?

Everyone here in Canada, of course, is asking himself these questions; asking himself what his responsibility is and where his responsibility lies. And there is no indication, as yet, that there will be any necessity for forcing a decision upon an individual—which is as it should be. But I am quite sure that to date in this war I have seen fewer instances of individuals enlisting in order to manifest their bravery, or refraining from enlisting because of fear, than there were in the last one. This, too, I take as a sign that perhaps this present conflict is more in the nature of a disciplinary than an imperialistic combat.

Yours,

Bill

V. THE DISCIPLINE OF FREEDOM

Dear Bill:

It is gratifying to read what you have to say about the emotions, and especially about fear. I have always felt a little ashamed of myself for being afraid, so I would like to believe you when you say fear is nothing to be ashamed of. (As you put it, it is perfectly logical, I know—but I wonder sometimes whether all this logic is not just to save face?) Even if it isn't true, it's a satisfying philosophy, because we often feel such hypocrites, trying to make our children brave when we are afraid ourselves.

The other day we were sitting at the dinner table, which in our home, as you know, is a place where we see the children all together. As they grow up, it begins to look as though this will be the only time of day when we *will* have them all together. Anyhow, George, who will soon be sixteen, asked whether in the army, if you did not obey a command, you would be shot. I think Don answered a little unthinkingly, saying "Yes"; and George immediately said, "Wouldn't it be a good idea if we had that same plan in peacetime? Then everything would run smoothly." Little Victoria startled us by saying, "It

would be peaceful because we would all be shot." This started us thinking.

Certain questions arose out of the discussion that I am sure you would be interested in; and I would be glad to know your opinion. For example, how do they get soldiers to obey commands? And is there any difference in the way they run an army and the way they run a country—and should there be? What happens in the armies of peaceful countries? Is the worst thing that can be done to a boy who has been raised in peacetime to place him in an army where obedience is demanded? This is all very confused, but if you can straighten it out I would be most grateful.

I am particularly anxious to hear what you have to say, because at George's school they have a cadet corps. There has been a great impetus in recruiting for it, lately, and George is wondering whether he should belong to it or not.

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

I was wondering how long it was going to take before we came to the question of discipline, because that is what you have been skirting around.

I don't suppose there is any term more misused and misunderstood, certainly in the bringing up of children, than the word discipline. It is well to keep in mind that discipline should always be considered a noun and never a verb. Discipline is a plan or

method by which we teach children. I suppose teaching is a poor word too, because we are prone to look upon teaching as an active process when as a matter of fact it is no such thing, or should not be. It is the learning that is active: the teaching is merely directive. The more active teaching becomes, the less opportunity there is for learning.

When we look about us we find there seems to be some plan to the universe. There is a stability, and if we inquire more closely we can interpret the phenomena about us as being subject to certain rules and regulations. There seems to be an order. I am not going into a discussion of why this should be, because that would take us a little far afield; but it is important to appreciate how much we insist upon believing this order is maintained. Even if an earthquake occurs, we attempt to describe this as a necessary phenomenon in terms of the forces that are at work; and all these forces, of course, are subject to the same laws that appear to maintain the order itself.

The first thing we have to remember when we come to the place of human beings in this scheme is that they *learn* to fit into it. And it is perfectly obvious that in the learning there is an almost infinite possibility of variations in behavior. If the child were reared in isolation there would be nobody to be concerned with this variability. But in so far as we *do* happen to live together, everybody becomes concerned not only with his own behavior but with the behavior of others; and whether we have been successful or not, there is no one who is without an

opinion on the standard to which behavior should, or must, conform.

This is a little different from our attitude towards the natural phenomena. Nobody complains about the fact that a maple tree grows maple leaves; that fact is accepted; but we are all quite justified in complaining if our children behave in a manner of which we disapprove. So, when we talk about the training of children, the first thing we have to ask is, What are the standards of behavior we are going to accept? This is not so simple, Beth, as it appears, because as soon as we begin to choose between various forms of behavior we are in a measure stepping out of the rôle of teacher and are becoming discriminators and, in a sense, dictators.

When we say to a child, "You must have clean hands when you come to the table to eat," we are not following any fundamental law but are catering to our own whims. Biologically, clean hands are not necessary at mealtime or perhaps at any other time, yet for some reason or other we who are adults have grown accustomed to some degree of cleanliness and would find it uncomfortable if we could not get our own way. Perhaps it is because we are never really hungry; for I am quite sure that under the stress of extreme hunger the question of cleanliness would not interfere with the satisfaction of this appetite. The same thing may be said about a great many of the behavior patterns that we accept more or less unthinkingly—modesty in dress, decency in language, industry in work, courtesy in groups, punctuality in engagements, and so on. These, as you can see, are all

forms of behavior which have evolved but are in no sense imperative. They are simply standards which a group of people have decided upon as acceptable and let go at that. We might even go further and ask why we disapprove of stealing and willful destruction and murder. Even these are merely acceptable standards of behavior which, I don't have to tell you, are being violated every minute of the day in certain parts of the world. Just because we say stealing is immoral and uncleanness is unsocial, it does not follow that these two forms of behavior are not exactly the same, psychologically.

Now, Beth, don't misunderstand me. I am not trying to suggest that these standards are in any sense unnecessary or foolish or unintelligent. I am just pointing out that when we try to interpret the rules and regulations by which we attempt to lay down standards of behavior, we are not in any sense imitating the so-called natural laws, such as gravity. A body *must* fall. The only essential laws applicable to human behavior are those which try to describe the attempt on the part of the individual to satisfy the fundamental motives that I discussed in the first letter. The peculiar manner in which these motives may be satisfied under the influence of the directive forces in any civilized or uncivilized community must be interpreted differently.

If you are going to teach (and all who are associated with children are in some degree teachers), it is important to remember that you must have a standard. This standard may often be rather vague; but nevertheless it is impossible to direct unless

there is a direction. Once a standard of behavior has been decided upon, however, it is possible for the psychologist to point out the way in which this standard may be presented to the child so that the child may most quickly conform to standards.

The emphasis in this discussion will now be on learning, because only through learning can the child adapt his behavior to suit the requirements. Learning itself is a process which has never been examined at first hand. We can only study this phenomenon through its result, namely, achievement. We feel that learning would not take place unless the individual felt some inadequacy. This may further be described by saying that the individual is continually under the influence of some motive. When the motive is operating, the individual feels unsatisfied until he has arranged the environment in such a way that satisfaction of that motive ensues. It is this "unsatisfaction" that makes the feeling of inadequacy possible, because we must never forget that organisms are conscious and are continually interpreting their states in terms of their own satisfactions. When a child is hungry he is unsatisfied, and he strives to bring about satisfaction in any way possible. It is our job to see that he has an opportunity of learning a *particular* way.

And so we, Beth, as teachers, have to do two things. We have to see that there is a possibility of the child's so arranging the environment that he may satisfy the motive; and second, we have to influence him so that he will want to satisfy the motive in the manner we consider most acceptable. Don't forget

that a child will learn, whether you want him to or not; for learning cannot be impeded or prevented. The teacher never teaches the child to learn, but directs the learning into certain channels. Hence it is necessary to keep in mind that unless attention is paid to creating in the learner a desire to learn a particular thing, the direction of his learning may go off at a tangent. It is this tangent, which we are so ready to call a crime, or a misdemeanor, or naughtiness, that creates all the confusion.

It is inevitable that in any learning, no matter how ideal the circumstances, the child is going to make mistakes. It is well to keep this in mind, because if we are too rigid in our requirements we tend to become impatient of these mistakes. Thus, as the child grows up he is bound to make mistakes in the process of learning "how to be honest." These mistakes we call lies. According to this every child lies, which, of course, is a matter of common observation. Therefore we have to be lenient and expect the child to lie. Our aim is to see that the learning process is carried on long enough so that ultimately lying is not included in the child's adaptive responses. I don't think it is necessary for me to say that in this respect we have not yet succeeded very well in our plan. We also say every child steals, because stealing is the term we apply to the actions of a child who makes a mistake while learning the complicated system of property ownership existing in most societies. Obviously, if there were no private property there could not be stealing. With the sex behavior of children, it is the same. Oftentimes we are too greatly con-

cerned with the mistakes the child makes in learning our stereotyped sex patterns.

In other words, learning takes time, and perfection can be achieved only through repeated practice. Oftentimes, a child does not have the opportunity of practicing sufficiently to reach the standard we have set. In fact, if we were to be charitable we would say that is what is wrong with a great majority of adults, if not with all.

How does a child learn to improve his performance? Mere practice is not enough. There must be a conscious effort on the part of the individual to eliminate certain patterns which impede his progress to whatever goal he has in mind. He must also strive to facilitate or to imprint more indelibly the patterns that will lead to the successful achievement of his goal. There are a great many opinions as to how this particular elimination and fixation takes place inside the organism, and I am not going to bore you with all the explanations of this phenomenon, for that is as yet a matter of only academic interest. We do, however, know some of the factors that influence the proficiency of this dual performance. Keep in mind that at every moment of our lives we do some particular thing rather than another one. In other words, we are continuously selecting a particular pattern under the influence of our motivation of the moment and the exigencies of the immediate environment. We might say that we are continuously choosing or deciding. It is this selective process that is the most obvious aspect of learning itself. If we could examine the criteria which we employ for making

the particular choice that we do, then, perhaps, it would be possible for us to use these criteria as a basis for directing the choice.

After an analysis of behavior and an interpretation of its conscious aspects at the same time, we may conclude that the choice of any particular act is determined by the consequence of that act. Obviously, in so far as life is continuous there is always a consequence of every act. We can examine the characteristics of the consequences that make for an efficient functioning of the eliminative and fixative mechanism. First, we must go back to our description of human motives, as set down in my first letter. If you remember, I pointed out that children developed attitudes of acceptance or withdrawal towards every situation they would meet. It is possible that at birth all children respond more or less in common to certain common situations: the average child responds negatively to pain and cold and heat, and responds positively to food and warmth and comfort. Ignoring for the moment the possibility that there might be wide individual differences, at any rate, as the child grows up, he is going to include in either of these categories a great many experiences which another individual may respond to in the opposite direction. Thus, our tastes as we grow up become perhaps more individual than any other aspect of our personalities. I stress this development because it is almost impossible to lay down strictly what are pleasant things in the world and what are unpleasant things; for it is not the nature of the thing itself that determines whether it is nice or nasty, but rather the attitude

of the individual who responds to it that determines this classification. And so it is difficult for an individual observing another one to predict what is a pleasant and what is an unpleasant experience.

When we are studying the consequences of acts, we cannot lay down any definite rule that such and such a consequence is unpleasant and hence the child will eliminate it, and that such and such a consequence is pleasant and the child will fixate it. We can only say the child will fixate those responses towards which he has an attitude of approach, and will eliminate those acts whose consequences he has learned are unpleasant. These values never remain fixed but are always interpreted at the moment in terms of the response. Thus we cannot say that pain is always an unpleasant experience and that a child or an adult will always respond negatively to pain, because there may be another factor involved which will make it necessary for the child to accept the pain in order to achieve the goal that might, at the moment, be particularly urgent. When we watch the child adjusting to the physical environment, we find that although he makes mistakes his adjustment, in a short time, becomes more and more adequate; and when we examine the consequences of the physical environment we find they have four characteristics, namely: they are immediate, inevitable, invariable and graduated. In other words, if a child steps off a table into space, the consequences of that act are immediate—he does not have to wait until next day to find out what is going to happen. They are inevitable—he has no mechanism to prevent its happening. They are in-

variable—falling is always the consequence, and subsequently landing at the bottom. Lastly, the consequence is graduated, in that it is definitely proportional to the space through which he falls.

We have no way of knowing whether these consequences are unpleasant or not to a small child. It is more than likely that there are some elements therein which are acceptable to the child; but as he grows up, he learns to choose to maintain a more or less stable position and to avoid falling. And in the same way he learns to avoid cutting himself with a knife, and burning himself, and so on. It is a mistake to think that these consequences are efficient because they may be painful. They are efficient because the child chooses to adjust in a particular way; and the learning is efficient because the consequences are consistent. *It is the consistency of the characteristics of the consequences, and not their particular form, that determines the speed of learning.*

When we come to the learning of social patterns, we find that on the whole the consequences must be arranged arbitrarily. There isn't any consistent ready-made plan according to which, if a child lies, the consequences of that lie will be immediate, inevitable, invariable or graduated, for in the first place he may not be found out, and in the second place you may say you are going to take a little time to think it over. In the third place you may say, "I will let you off this time"; in the fourth place, no matter what you may decide to do in the way of unpleasant consequences, you don't know how to graduate them according to the seriousness of the offense. Further-

more, you don't know whether the consequences will be reacted to in terms of the offense. That is, you don't know whether the child's reaction will be to take care not to be found out the next time, or whether he will stop lying and avoid the consequences. This analysis applies to all the behavior patterns that have social significance.

Of course, I don't think it is necessary at this time to point out to a mother as modern as you are that the old Mosaic law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is a standard of judging or controlling behavior that is as uncivilized and barbaric as anything possibly could be. No one today would imagine that a teacher in any sense attempts to retaliate, or that a parent is arranging a consequence for the sake of inflicting pain. The teacher, on the contrary, is interested in directing the behavior away from certain forms which are unacceptable. How can this end be accomplished in a social situation? How may consequences of a consistent sort be arranged—consequences towards which the child will respond in such a manner that he will avoid and eliminate unacceptable behavior patterns and fixate the more acceptable forms?

I hope you see that this plan has a positive as well as a negative outlook. We are just as much interested in seeing that the child conforms as in seeing that he does not non-conform. The crux of the whole matter, Beth, is in remembering that most behavior patterns have social significance. They are all interpreted in the light of their social value; and this gives us the clue for the solution of the problem. There is a con-

sequence which we can use, and which possesses the four characteristics mentioned above. That consequence is *isolation*. When a child, or an adult for that matter, behaves in a manner which is unacceptable (note that you don't have to argue—you act just because you think the behavior unacceptable), you remove him, if necessary forcibly, from the society in which this act was committed. You see, you can immediately remove him; inevitably remove him; invariably remove him, because it is the only arbitrary consequence you have at your disposal; and you can graduate the consequence by letting the individual himself decide how long he wishes to remain isolated.

I know you are going to ask, "Well, how does that work? The child may not care whether he is removed or not." This, Beth, is the joker in the plan. For this plan places on the society in which the child happens to be a responsibility for making attendance more desirable than non-attendance. This aspect of social training has been neglected, perhaps through complacency. We have assumed that all children, and certainly adults, would rather be with us than away from us. I don't have to point out how often we may be mistaken in this conclusion. But, you see, this does not in any way diminish the efficacy of the procedure, because if the child would rather be away from you, then you are not concerned with his behavior. But let me assure you that it is the easiest thing in the world to arrange an environment, both physical and social, within which a child would rather be than be somewhere else. When a child runs away it is not because he is a vagrant. He runs away because he is trying to

find some place better than where he is; and to deny this is to delude oneself about a great many of our social gatherings. This includes the family.

There are times when it is possible to make use of the motivating forces as directive agents, if we understand them; times when it is not necessary to use the arbitrary consequence of isolation as a plan of teaching. For example, if a child does not wish to eat, then the consequences of his behavior are inherent and, of course, relevant to the situation itself. If he eats he is going to be satisfied, and if he does not, he is going to remain hungry. The opportunity for individual choice is perfectly obvious. No other arbitrary procedure is necessary. In fact, any procedure that is added to this situation is bound to interfere with the efficacy of the consequences inherent in the situation as a whole. When there is no apparent relevant consequence of this sort, one uses isolation as a disciplinary procedure.

You may ask, "Is it ever justifiable or is it ever necessary to use force in a training program?" The answer, of course, is Yes. If you have laid down a rule that the child should be in bed at 6:30 at night, then, however arbitrary this decision, should the child rebel the only possible procedure, if you have confidence and faith in your standard, is to put him to bed forcibly. If you are walking along the street with your five-year-old, and she attempts to dart into the road in which there is heavy traffic, you will grab the child and forcibly restrain her from doing so. In these situations the child is not learning either to go to bed or to stay off the street, because in these situations it

is the adult who makes the decision, the adult who accepts the responsibility. Only when the child has reached that stage in learning where he is capable of evaluating the consequences of his acts is it possible for the adult to place the responsibility for such a choice on the child. This training in the acceptance of responsibility is the actual goal of child training; and as you can see, it cannot be done directly. It can only be done indirectly. The parent has the responsibility for making decisions up to the point where the child can make them for himself. That point, of course, depends on two things, first, age; second, opportunity for practice. Perhaps these are not two different conditions, but only one. At least *time* and practice are necessary.

The parent watching the child develop is certainly concerned with more than just the rudiments of apparent social adjustment. He is concerned with the child's opinions, prejudices, plans and ambitions. There is an infallible rule which we can lay down with reference to our attempts at influencing our children. There are only two ways, one by *force*, the other by *suggestion*. With reference to force, there are certain conditions under which an adult is justified in using it: first, when you know it is going to work; second, if you are willing to accept the responsibility for the consequences of the other individual's acts. Force may be the actual laying on of hands such as I described with reference to the child on the curbing, or it may be verbal, in which case we call it a command. The same two conditions apply: first, never give a command unless you know it is going to

be obeyed or you have some means of seeing it is obeyed; and second, you must accept full responsibility for the command or order you are giving. If you observe these two rules, Beth, you will find that the use of force and the giving of commands gradually become less and less frequent, until, when the individual is mature, there is no longer any necessity for using either. At this stage the teacher may be said to have accomplished the task that was set.

As for the other way in which we influence the behavior of other people, namely, by suggestion, there are certain conditions which must be observed. First, when you suggest a plan of action, you should present to the child alternatives and their consequences. The suggestion should always be made with the implication that you are not personally concerned whether the individual accepts your suggestion or not. The second condition is that you accept no responsibility for the individual's choice except the accuracy of your prediction of the consequences.

For example, if your boy George comes to you and says, "Shall I go to a dance tonight or not?" you may have an opinion one way or the other; but at his age and under your guidance I am quite sure the answer would not be either Yes or No. If you say No, he may sneak out and go to the dance anyway. You have no way, short of locking him in his room, of making sure he obeys you; and if you say Yes, and he goes and has an uninteresting time, he might blame you for it. A better plan under these circumstances would be for you to suggest, first, that he would have to make up his own mind; that you don't know very

much about this particular dance, but you feel he might have a good time. Or you can say he is bound to be tired, and he is going out the next day, so perhaps if he stayed home he would feel fresher. (You can make up your own ideas.) Notice, though, that what you are doing is trying to envisage for George what is going to happen if he makes either choice. You are not going to be responsible for what he does. He has to accept the consequences. *But* you must be sure, when you project these consequences into the future, that you are accurate, because if he goes to the dance and has a good time and is not the least bit tired the next day, he will begin to lose faith in you as an adviser. And certainly there is no aspect of the relationship between you and George that you wish more to preserve than a feeling of confidence and respect. These traits develop only when confidence and respect are deserved; and they are earned by the parent or teacher by reason of the consistency of the arbitrary consequences he arranges.

You will notice, Beth, that in this discussion of discipline there are two words, usually emphasized, which I have tried to avoid—obedience and punishment. Obedience is a useful term, but it lays itself open to a great deal of abuse. A well-adjusted parent, for example, is not concerned especially with having his children obey him, but is interested, rather, in seeing that the child grows up to obey or conform to certain fundamental principles, call them morals if you like, which make social life not only peaceful and comfortable but possible. There are some people who are allergic to the term obedience, thinking it a sign

of slavery. But this isn't necessarily so. Where we have faith and confidence in a principle, and are willing to accept the prestige of the individual who has been placed in authority over us, and are sure that that person will not abuse the privilege and responsibility placed in him, then obedience is not only a rational form of behavior but acceptable and satisfying. *Blind* obedience is the denial of the right of an individual to choose whether he is willing to accept the consequences of his behavior or not; but obedience itself is often a sign of mature social training.

As for punishment, there is no place in a rational society for the administration of punitive justice. Retaliation is an infantile and primitive form of discipline. It implies a personal interest in inflicting pain or humiliation, and is usually a means of satisfying some perverted desire on the part of the individual who at the moment stands in a position where he can mete out a punishment without an opportunity for retaliation on the part of the person punished. History reveals innumerable occasions where the tables have been turned—and no end served except to give the sufferer on a previous occasion an opportunity for retaliating in kind. In any scheme of discipline we are interested in training, not sadism. The consequences we arrange are consequences which will lead the individual, we hope, to accept the judgment of the group, and to judge that the behavior he manifested was inimical to the group as a whole. The group bears no grudge, but is adamant in its decision. That this attitude is not only rational but practical is indicated by the fact that the gradual diminishing

of punitive justice in England, for example, has made for a more peaceful community. Some day corporal and capital punishment will be looked upon with the same degree of disapproval and wonder with which we today regard the medieval custom of trial by fire. There is an obvious reason why punishment has persisted for such a long time: because its immediate result, of course, is always inhibitory. But it requires no great insight to understand that the effect of punishment on the individual is not reformatory but chastening; that his reaction to this procedure is not to alter his overt behavior, but rather to improve his technique so that he will not be caught again. A philosophy of "Do what you like but never get caught" is certainly not one to be fostered in any society.

When we turn to the military life, we find a rather interesting contrast. An army can function efficiently only if it is a consolidated unit. The goal of an army is exactly opposite to the goal of a civilian group. An army is constituted to destroy; civil society is constituted to construct. Just as a boxer in the ring expects immediate co-operation from his arms and legs and body, so an army is an organism quite different from a group engaged in calmer pursuits. An army, of course, is the antithesis of a democracy, and rightly so, after you grant the premise that an army is useful. In an army the individual is not expected to use his initiative or to choose his line of action. From the private to the general in command there is a hierarchy of authority—but the responsibility rests entirely with the Head. As long as the subservient members obey the letter of their instructions, they will

avoid any of the unpleasant consequences disobedience would evoke. Of course, in an army, because of the emphasis on obedience, there is bound to be punishment, since the army is not interested in the development of an individual as a member of a democratic society, but only in that individual as he contributes to the efficiency of the army function. When his behavior is such as to interfere in a serious way with this function, the army can take extreme disciplinary measures. In very grave circumstances it can even take a soldier's life. This is a drastic measure; but then, the army isn't interested in the individual as such, and can always look for another unit to replace the one that has been liquidated. It is pointless to criticize the organization of an army in the light of the growth of democratic principles, because the philosophy of army life is that of a totalitarian state. It is a debatable question whether a democratic army could possibly function in an efficient way.

The next question is, Can individuals who have been brought up in a democracy according to the plan that I have outlined above get together and form an efficient army? The answer, of course, is Yes. The task is to convince the group that the reason for the organization of the army and the motive for putting it in the field for defensive or offensive purposes is justifiably a democratic one. It is for this reason that it takes a democracy so long to decide whether to go to war or not. This also explains the need for so much propaganda and education (I use these two

words because they are not synonymous), before a democracy comes to a warlike decision.

Here the question arises as to whether individuals in a democracy have a right to refrain from joining the army or not. This is a ticklish question, as you know; but it seems to me that in so far as each individual in a democracy is entitled to his own opinion, and can choose any behavior pattern unless it conflicts directly with the laws in which he has participated as a framer, then, in the period prior to the major decision of whether to declare war or not, everyone is entitled to speak for or against this decision, and to use any legitimate means to persuade the other members of the community that his point of view is the more rational. But once the decision is made it is inconceivable that an individual could do other than support that decision, because the welfare of a democracy lies not only in the freedom of expression of opinion, but also in the support of a decision of the majority. That oftentimes the majority may make a decision which the future proves to be erroneous is beside the point.

Canada and the United States are at the present time in different stages with reference to this particular problem. Let us assume that Canada and the United States are democracies. Canada, through its constituted Parliament, has declared war. There are undoubtedly some Canadians who feel this declaration of war was not the right procedure, but nevertheless, so long as our present legislators are in power, and so long as an individual wishes to derive some

benefit from the civilization we have organized, each individual must support that policy. There is at hand a democratic technique by which the contrary opinions may be expressed and brought to fruition, namely, the polls. In the United States you are still in the stage of deciding, and your decision will be made in as democratic a manner as ours. Today you are being subjected to propaganda and, I hope, education. Propaganda is directed towards people of immature judgment; and as judgment grows with age, it is the youth of the country who usually bear the brunt of this attack.

With reference to George, your job, as I see it, is to do your best to see that he sees the issues clearly. It is one of the tragedies of modern war that the great majority of those who are going to do the fighting are not old enough to vote; and for this reason it seems unfair. As to George joining the cadet corps—from what I have said above, he should make his own decision. It is unfortunate, but true, that at the present time it seems that one would be living in a fool's paradise if one thought war would never be declared by any particular country. Even Switzerland seems to be in a precarious position today. And so the question arises as to whether George feels that by joining the cadet corps and learning some of the principles of army life he may be better prepared if the call should come. To say that he will not join the cadet corps because he disapproves of war is, of course, not a sound policy, because, reasoning in this direction, the conclusion must be that if there were no cadet

corps, and hence no armies, there would never be war. This, of course, is a truism, but could come about only if there were no armies *anywhere*.

One can believe in the principle of a peaceful solution of all problems and still be a soldier. There are some, though, who feel that by joining a cadet corps and subjecting themselves to the military discipline, they thereby build up character. This, of course, is utter nonsense. If it were true, then the best thing would be to send all our criminals and delinquents into the army. Character, which is a name that covers a multitude of factors, can be built up only under the plan of discipline I have outlined to you. When this is departed from, certain traits of character develop which are inimical to a full life. The crime sheet of the army is no shorter than that of civilian life; and witness, too, the increase in violence after demobilization.

If, however, George decides he will not join the cadet corps because he considers it a waste of time (in that he has other and more useful tasks at hand), and appreciates that if it should become necessary for him to join the army, there will then be ample time for training and preparation, that is a sound decision too. The point is that his decision must not be forced either way by parental authority or by the consensus of the group. If, on the other hand, there is a rule in the school that he must join the cadet corps, his choice is either to join or leave that school. I don't think the question of cowardice comes into the picture. As I have written in a previous letter, no man

is a coward who has adopted a line of behavior and is willing to accept the consequences. He is only a coward if he attempts in any way to avoid the consequences of his behavior.

Yours,

Bill

VI. PRESTIGE—ITS CAUSE AND CURE

Dear Bill:

You certainly are telling us to do this business of raising children the hard way. Don and I have talked over the question of the cadet corps with George. We are delighted to see that he has not yet made up his mind one way or the other about joining, and you will be glad to hear that we did not try at all to influence his decision—though he knows, of course, what my feelings are.

War, I feel, and everything about it, is just a ghastly mistake mankind is making on the road to fuller learning. I guess that's what you've been saying too, Bill.

The idea of discipline seems to have changed a good deal (at least in some quarters) since our own childhood. And speaking of that, I was interested in your suggestion that propaganda is addressed to immature minds. Isn't child training also concerned with immature minds? "Propaganda" and "education" are two words we should be careful to keep apart, you say—but what really *is* the difference between them?

After your last letter, I would be interested to know what your mother would say about your ideas.

Yours,

Beth

My dear Beth:

You know, now that you speak of it, I have never seriously discussed any of my theories with my mother. I send her all my theories in published form (a little vanity on my part) but whether she reads them or not I can't say. When I go to visit her, we usually gossip about the family—and I have never had an occasion to ask whether she approved or not.

Do you remember how, in the old days, Mother used to fill the rôle of Florence Nightingale in the community in which we lived in Hamilton? That section of the city was called Corktown, on account of the Irish who lived there. And how we, a family lately arrived from Germany, landed there, I don't know. But Mother, as I well recall, acted as midwife, nurse and confidante to most of the families in the district. She was always on call. I can remember many a night when she wakened me to go with her—but one time especially, when a baby of eight months was having convulsions, and she was called at five o'clock in the morning. It was cold. We bundled up and I sat with her in the kitchen while she alternately immersed the child in a hot bath and rubbed it vigor-

ously with a dry towel. I can recall her wiping the mucus from the child's mouth so that it could breathe more freely; and about half past six the baby fell into a quiet sleep and we both trudged home.

Can you wonder that I have always had a deep feeling of respect for her, not unmixed with awe?

I don't think I can remember any time when either Mother or my Dad visited us with unfair or unjust discipline. I know that on no occasion has she ever interfered with the direction of my own thinking. But I also know that to her I am still the youngest of her nine children. I recall with a good deal of amusement an incident which happened some two or three years after I had graduated in medicine. I was visiting at home in Hamilton; and Adam's little girl, then about four, fell off the table and seemed badly hurt. I was examining her when Mother came in from an adjoining room, having heard the uproar, and, seeing her grandchild lying inert on the floor, immediately said, "Get a doctor! Get a doctor!"

In short, Beth, it is a little difficult for parents to think of their children as quite grown up. I am sure if I were to write her such letters as I have written you, she would perhaps commend me for being able to write at all, but reserve her judgment of my opinions. And if I pressed for her opinion, she would probably say she didn't bother her head about such things—that she just did what she thought was right. If I were to press her still further, I am sure she would say, "I hope you know what you're talking about."

You have asked me, Beth, to tell you what I mean

by "indoctrination"—for that, simply, is what propaganda is. In order to do this, I am going to describe to you what I think is the essence of education, and then contrast it with indoctrination.

Education is a plan for directing the learning of the pupil. It may, as we have seen, be either formal or informal; for the parent who is bringing up the child is no less an educator than the teacher with the class arranged before her, row on row.

The first thing that an educator has to think of is, "*What* shall I teach?" There is so much to be learned—such a limited time at his disposal. Children do grow up, and there has to be a selection. The selection of the content to be taught in the formal situation of the classroom is called a curriculum. Usually the mother, when teaching the child to dress himself, does not think in terms of curriculum, but nevertheless there has been some selection, as can be readily understood. Oftentimes in the informal situation of the home the term "standard of behavior" is used instead of "curriculum." The mother tries to teach the child to be truthful rather than deceptive, to be industrious rather than lazy, to be courteous rather than rude. This selection of behavior patterns corresponds to the kind of thing that goes on in the formal school situation, when they decide the class will study the geography of South America rather than that of North America. It is a selective process.

There is another task which the educator must perform and that is—*how* is he going to teach? There are many methods and techniques for making education efficient, but there is also a general attitude which the

true educator must always adopt. In so far as he is controlling or directing the learning he must always have in mind that there may be other ways of looking at the problem he is discussing, or other solutions of this problem. In other words, he is suggesting to the youngster a pattern of behavior; he suggests further that this pattern has been found useful and convenient and recommends its adoption. At the same time, he implies there is no compulsion exerted on the pupil for adopting the specific pattern if he can find one that is more suitable or convenient. It is apparent that the pupil must accept the consequences of selecting different patterns—but that the teacher is obligated to point out the consequences of a varied opinion.

Let me give some examples. The mother is concerned in teaching a child to use a fork and a knife at the dinner table. After all, there are many other ways to eat than by the use of a fork and knife. Chopsticks, fingers, straws are other tools. The mother suggests that the knife-and-fork technique is acceptable in our society and that it would be well for the child to acquire some skill with *these* tools. This is an arbitrary method, but most people seem to like it. It is suggested to the child that this is not compulsory; but that if he does not want to learn, he'll have to have his meals alone. This is the consequence of choosing to be different. Thus the educator selects a curriculum but presents it in such a way that the child can choose to accept or reject on the basis of the consequences of either choice. As the child grows up, he learns that it is convenient to use a knife and fork,

but that, if he can get a group of his contemporaries to agree with him, there is another method of eating—and then he can form a society in which this new behavior pattern is *au fait*. As you see, the child is being directed and not forced.

Let us take the question of mathematics. The teacher presents to the child the content $2 + 2 = 4$. In the same manner as above it is suggested that this formula is accepted by most people in our society—that it would be as well for the child to learn this accepted method. It may be that at times $2 + 2$ do not equal 4, but the child is going to meet fewer difficult situations and make fewer mistakes if he learns the acceptable answer. And so also with an appreciation of literature. A child is told that certain extracts of Shakespeare are accepted as masterpieces of English diction. But it should be suggested that he may make his own selections; that there may be other passages that appeal to him more and that, as far as he is concerned, he may choose other authors of literary excellence whom he prefers to the selection made for him in English 3a.

I hope, Beth, I am making clear to you that the educator *must* select but that this selection is made on some arbitrary standard in which the educator believes. Secure in that belief, he permits the pupil to experiment, to be a vagrant, as it were, knowing that with growing experience the child will ultimately accept the selection recommended if it fits in with his maturing judgment, or will not accept it, for the same reason. In any case, the educator is satisfied because he is not interested so much in the crystalli-

zation of a content as he is in the development of good judgment. It is more important *how* you learn than *what* you learn.

You may well ask, Beth, whether this is a feasible plan of education. It looks as if we were going to permit the child to choose what he likes. In essence that is exactly what you do as a good educator. There is in practice, however, a factor which modifies to some extent the apparent freedom of choice of the pupil. When I discussed the relationship among human beings, I mentioned that each is trying to influence the other in a social situation. In the course of growing up an individual acquires what is called prestige. Prestige is the factor that determines the direction of influence. An individual with higher prestige can direct more readily than an individual with lower prestige.

The most important factor in raising the prestige of an individual in a reasonable society is the acquisition of skill. The better skater, talker, painter, surgeon, writer has ipso facto more prestige than the one less skilled. A teacher presumably has more skill in the subject he is teaching than his pupils have, and for this reason has more prestige and is more likely then to be imitated by his pupils and to have his opinions accepted. But by this very same token such a teacher is inclined to be more tolerant of pupils who question his opinions and belittle his skill. He is secure in his own accomplishments. If by any chance the teacher must depend on other factors for raising his prestige, then his tolerance and patience are supplanted by dogmatism and arrogance. What

are these factors (other than skill itself) that can raise the prestige of an individual? Their source can always be found in the customs and traditions more or less approved by the society in which he lives—power represented by arbitrary authority, social position acquired through birth, money and the things money can buy, and so on.

Thus a parent who seeks to educate by virtue of the position of parenthood, and the arbitrary authority that parenthood assumes in some societies, cannot carry on in the manner I have described above. Such a parent is too concerned with the prestige of his position as recognized by society, and also too conscious of his lack of skill. And so, too, a teacher may take refuge in the authority vested in his position—whereupon he abdicates as a good teacher.

And so, Beth, that is my definition of education. Where the teacher with the self-confidence gained through experience attempts to direct and motivate along the lines that have proved successful in a well-adjusted life, and is patient and tolerant of the pupil who seeks new and different solutions, there are, after all, more ways than one to skin a cat.

We come now to a discussion of indoctrination. I will attempt (bear with me) to show wherein lies the difference between this and education *as such*.

Just as the plan or method is the important aspect of education, so too by this aspect one distinguishes it from indoctrination. The plan which is employed in order to indoctrinate presents only one alternative and suppresses or distorts all others. The pupil is prevented, by this device, from any choice in the matter.

It is easy to see that with immature students the suppression of the other alternatives is the simpler plan. Because of lack of experience such a pupil does not realize, and is kept from the realization, that there may be other solutions to current problems. This method is commonly employed in the teaching of history in elementary schools in every country. It is prevalent, too, in the teaching of religion; but no field of knowledge or belief is immune from the use of this technique. The use of statistics, especially, is often not above such suspicion.

In our formal education (so great is the prestige of the written word), one finds individuals using the fact that something has been published as evidence of its veracity. This is a form of distortion. Most commonly, Beth, both suppression and distortion are used to guarantee the more ready acceptance of the content.

So insidious is this technique that most of us are often unaware of the source of many of our opinions and prejudices. If we look back, we will discover that we have supinely accepted opinions because of the prestige of another individual. An analysis of this prestige usually discloses that it is dependent upon the other factors that I mentioned above, rather than on skill or knowledge. Oftentimes we discover that we have transferred prestige from one field to another. Thus, Jones is a very wealthy man—and because of his monetary success we may be inclined to accept his opinion in politics. So-and-so may be an outstanding violinist: but I would rather trust my own judgment as to the excellence of an omelette.

However, we find ourselves influenced by these subtle forms of indoctrination because most of us have been brought up on them. Our suspicions have been the more especially allayed, too, since so many of us make use of the same technique in our own indoctrinal pursuits.

There is another distinction that is not easy to make between education and indoctrination. Usually, the prime concern of the educator is in the welfare of the pupil. He is interested in making it easier for the pupil to grow up, or adjust. The indoctrinaire, on the other hand, is more interested in the content, and in his own prestige; and usually there is some other ulterior motive not openly expressed. When this ulterior motive is dominant in the situation, we apply the term "propaganda" to the indoctrination.

Propaganda is an old term for an old custom.

There is an infallible rule to follow whenever an individual suspects he is being subjected to some sort of propaganda. First, ascertain the source. Propaganda always has a human origin, although this may be disguised or counterfeited. Second, having verified the source, one asks what is the goal or aim of the individual responsible for the spreading of the propaganda in question. Then, third, does the acceptance of the content of the propaganda further the interests of the individual or group? If the answer to the last question is Yes, one should be suspicious of the veracity of the statement, especially if the other side of the question is suppressed or distorted. One should take special precautions with political propa-

ganda, patriotic propaganda, religious propaganda, and, perhaps, advertising in all its forms.

It is easy to see, Beth, that it is only after a great deal of practice and experience that an individual can deal with propaganda in an efficient and mature way. The only safeguard we have is to see that our children are brought up on a habit of healthy scepticism. Scepticism reduces impulsive behavior to a minimum; scepticism is the antidote to the demagogue; and by scepticism we arrive at opinions based on experience and confidence which we have learned not to misplace.

This leads us to an aspect of child training especially pertinent at this particular time, namely, the question of censorship. Censorship, of course, is negative propaganda. I think it can be safely said that any direct form of censorship is always an indication of insecurity on the part of the censor or the group he represents. A censorious parent is one who has little confidence in his own principles. A censorious community is one that is beginning to lose faith in its own standards. Oftentimes these standards are arbitrary and unthinkingly accepted. One of the most interesting phases of studying human beings is reached when we consider the changes from generation to generation in these standards. The only thing that does not change is the feeling that some form of censorship is necessary. It is easy to forget our own youth and adolescence. In a well-trained community there is no need for direct censorship. It is always an expression of failure in training.

This does not mean, of course, that the community

should not have standards. I am not quarreling with the standards but with the methods employed for inculcating them or maintaining them. A community, whether it be a city, family, or a nation, must have certain standards of behavior: otherwise there can be no growth in values, nor can there be an appreciation of living. The method of presenting these standards to the child I have discussed as *discipline*. Direct censorship, however, is always a form of indoctrination. The example set is the most potent form of training in this regard.

The child, as he grows up, is analyzing, judging and evaluating people, not things or standards. He learns to respect certain persons because of the fairness and justice of their discipline and their degree of skill. Having acquired respect, these individuals enjoy prestige. The standards of behavior manifested by persons who have such prestige will be acquired by the children through imitation, whether wittingly or unwittingly. That is, the child will deliberately take on the mannerisms and behavior patterns of someone he respects, and will also unwittingly acquire the ethical standards which he sees about him and admires. He adopts the standards, not because he has to, but because he wants to. Very frequently, because the child is learning, he will make mistakes and fail in his attempts at conforming to a standard. These so-called violations or delinquencies are to be expected. If, however, they are dealt with justly, sympathetically, the child learns that the only compulsion is from within. Then he makes up his own mind

that the standards are useful or not, as the case may be.

With his growth in maturity, the child learns to accept those standards which are reasonable and sensible, and to discard others that have outlived their usefulness or have proved in changing times to mean less and less. Such standards as cleanliness, punctuality, tidiness, busyness, courtesy, good manners, all are subject to change; and none of them is a virtue in and of itself. The child learns they are useful and acquires a certain proficiency in conformity with his social development. Any force or compulsion used is bound to develop antagonism and resentment, or at any rate to emphasize the importance of these characteristics far out of proportion. If the child comes to the table with dirty hands you do not castigate him for uncleanness but simply state that you have grown accustomed to eating with people with clean hands—it may be an idiosyncrasy on your part, but nevertheless you rather enjoy cleanliness. If the child would rather eat alone and have dirty hands, that is his own decision, but if he wishes to eat at the table with the rest of the family he will have to learn this standard. When he grows up he may adopt whatever standard of cleanliness he wishes so long as he can get a sufficient number of companions to think as he does.

If only we could raise children to adopt this attitude, we would not have to be subjected to the type of censorship that is being portrayed in our advertising these days with reference to B.O. and halitosis. Again, if a child uses a vulgar expression it is not

necessary to hit the roof. In the first place, by giving vent to a violent reaction you at once acknowledge that you are fully cognizant of the significance of the vulgarity, which, in common parlance, is a "dead give-away." Furthermore, you have enhanced the excitement in the situation and thereby made it more likely that the expression will be repeated, if not in front of you, at least before others. By refraining from using such vulgarity or profanity yourself and by indicating that that is what you expect in your society, you offer the child the choice of whether he would rather be in your society, and that of others such as you are, and refrain from such vulgarity, or whether the vulgarity is more important than your society. Obviously, if a child calls his parent a big bum the intensity of the response is directly proportional to the truth of the assertion. This same plan applies also to the censorship of books, movies and radio.

After all, you are responsible for developing the taste of the child. If you have faith in your own cultural standards and are not just assuming them for their social value, you may rest assured that in such an environment the child will accept your standards as he grows up. In the meantime, of course, he is going to experiment. By prohibiting him from indulging in certain experiences through reading, or the radio, or movies, you are not ensuring that these experiences will be avoided. Rather, you are adding to them the value of something he is not supposed to do.

I have always been amused at the form censorship

takes in democracies, because it is apparent that if there is a necessity for widespread censorship of the movies and of books, those people who have been entrusted with the developing of the general taste have failed in their task. It seems to me grotesque to admit that if there were two movie theaters on the street, one presenting a movie which was vulgar, indecent and perhaps pornographic, and the other an interesting, pleasant and innocuous picture, we seem inclined to believe the populace would stream into the former, and that the latter would be playing to an empty house.

As far as children are concerned, I think they can be permitted to form their own judgments. Usually, for a great deal of what we adults consider vicious, we have only our own training to thank. The children, under the same circumstances, see nothing vicious in the experience at all; but by a system of censorship they very readily learn to see the double meaning in anything which lends itself to this interpretation. As soon as the child is old enough to understand the innuendoes and does so, then censorship is no longer of any use. The bootlegging of censored literature has a much longer history than bootlegging in alcoholic beverages. I know one father who feels that the comic strips are vulgar and prohibits his children from reading them. It is amazing that he does not realize that the children, all three of them, now make it a point to visit their friends to enjoy these forbidden fruits—and then say nothing about it at home.

And so, Beth, to refer to a question you asked in

your first letter, about tabloids, the radio, and such: whenever you find you are about to censor some experience with reference to your four children, you are by that very fact admitting failure in your training. Censorship in a democracy—necessary though it may be in wartime—is in reality a paradox, as I have said before.

In this letter I am on strong ground (regardless of what you may now think of my theories), because I can definitely maintain that the methods you should use with your four children in connection with propaganda, indoctrination and censorship, as I have discussed them, are efficient. By teaching them in the manner that I have called education, you are fashioning for them an armor which becomes stronger and stronger as they grow up; and with maturity one would find it difficult to influence their behavior by those devices which, in modern civilization, have taken the place of the Inquisitor, the Provost Marshal and the Devil's Advocate.

Yours,

Bill

VII. THE SENSE OF POWER

Dear Bill:

When we were discussing your letter last night, Don made the observation that he wondered how much of it was indoctrination. But we finally concluded you did not care whether we really *did* believe it or not, and for the time being at least we will include it under the heading of education. At least by my letters I am indicating that I am willing to expose myself to your influence, but whether it will take or not, I am not sure. I must say that when we tried to explain it to George his only comment was, "Aw, nuts!" which I am sure you will interpret as healthy scepticism. I found myself on the point of saying that he should have more respect for the dignity of your position, but just caught myself in time. So perhaps I did learn something from your letter.

In one of your previous letters, you said something about power and a desire for power—and you indicated that it was not a fundamental human urge or need. I have forgotten your exact words. Now this rather puzzles me, because when we look around us we find that certainly here in America ambition can only be translated as a desire for power of some sort—or am I right in using the term in this sense? And

we hear about power politics and so on. How does this fit into your scheme of bringing up children? Must we avoid the use of this term, or can we bring up children in such a way that they do not want to be powerful?

Yours,

Beth

P.S. You will be pleased to know that George is now center on the basketball team. Night before last they beat their bitterest rivals 51 to 40.

Dear Beth:

I think George shows a great deal of perspicacity and a good deal of healthy scepticism. In rereading a couple of these letters, I have almost been tempted to use the same expression he did.

But I am rather interested in the question you ask in your letter, especially after reading your postscript. It may seem a far cry from a discussion of "power" to the winning of a basketball game; but it is precisely in such situations that the desire for power is fostered. Let us start at the beginning.

In the beginning there is life, and life is activity. Activity brings about changes in itself: and this change is learning. When a child changes his pattern of response to fit a new situation, we say that he has learned. Learning is a fascinating phenomenon to the psychologist and one can't hope to discuss it here in any detail.

We can study learning only in terms of its results. A person learns, he achieves; the result is called achievement; and it is only by studying the achievement of individuals that we ourselves learn about learning.

Keep in mind that learning is a continuous process. We cannot study or observe the process itself, but we can observe the various factors that affect the efficacy of the process. There are three such factors—motivation, capacity and persistence.

I have already discussed motivation and will recall briefly that learning takes place only when the individual is attempting to satisfy one or other of the motives. Since he is always motivated, learning is then continuous, as I mentioned above; but the particular motives that are operative determine the selection of behavior patterns, and the variation in urgency or in intensity determines the speed of learning. Thus we may say that what an individual learns is always in terms of what he wants at the time, and that the speed of learning is influenced by how much he wants it, whatever it is.

Capacity is the inborn quality an individual possesses which determines the efficiency of the learning. This is the potential of the individual. It can never be measured directly: its amount is calculated in terms of the achievement. The achievement may be called the ability. The ability is a manifest capacity. One can guess the capacity of the individual through his abilities; and when one does so, the conclusion is called intelligence. I am not going to spend more time on this aspect, as it is not pertinent to the ques-

tion of the moment. Suffice it to say that each one of us has an inherent capacity, but that very few of us ever exhaust our potentialities, largely because of the first factor of motivation, which I have already mentioned. In other words, we could all do a little better than we have done in any field if we wanted to.

The third factor is persistence. In order to acquire sufficient patterns of behavior, often called habits, we must repeat our attack over and over again. The situation must be rearranged and repeated until we become satisfied with the degree of skill which evolves. This routine or drill or practice is a commonplace to anyone who has learned anything.

These three factors are involved in all learning. We must *want to learn* to some degree; we must have some degree of capability; and we must persist in our practicing, the amount of which depends on the difficulty of the task and the degree of skill we are seeking to develop.

Since life is a dynamic rather than a static phenomenon, we should expect some changes to take place as the individual grows up. I'm going to try to point out some of the significant changes pertinent to the question you asked in your letter.

First of all, the child, as his conscious life expands, begins to recognize two aspects of the environment: first, the circumstances that will satisfy motivating experiences; and second, the motivating experiences themselves. For example, as the child grows up he learns that various sensory experiences recurring together more or less frequently may be interpreted as hunger. When he feels "that way" he knows he is

hungry. Furthermore, he learns that the group of sensory experiences in the environment which pleasantly satisfy the hunger can be called a bottle, and so he learns that when he is hungry the thing to do is to look around for a bottle, or at least to recognize it when it comes within his view. Later on, of course, it will be a biscuit, or a steak or a cream puff or an ice cream cone which he will anticipate. In this way the child may be said to acquire wants, desires or wishes.

I must warn you, Beth, that one must never assume that what an individual wants will always satisfy the motive, because there is a double chance for error. First, the child may not interpret his motives of the moment accurately, and second, he may not recognize fully what will satisfy him. When we see a child restless and irritable, we don't know whether he is hungry, thirsty, bored, tired or what not; and furthermore, he may not know himself. I'm sure you will agree that even adults at times are a little puzzled to know what they need and what they think they want in order to satisfy themselves. If you have never been in such a dilemma, you're a wonder.

Theoretically, the needs of an individual remain constant. They are fundamental. The wants, desires and wishes are infinite in their variety, depending on the individual experience. If you have never had a crêpe suzette you may never want one. If you have never seen an automobile you will not want to ride in one. And so the change that takes place in the general field of motivation is in the expansion of wants and not in the fundamental needs.

With reference to capacity, we assume that this remains constant although it cannot actually be demonstrated. There are some who believe that this factor, too, changes as we grow up. My opinion is, that whatever change seems to take place in our potentialities is owing to a change in motivation and persistence.

Now we come to the third factor, persistence or practice. You have seen a child try over and over again to master a difficult passage in his music, or perhaps as a better illustration, you have seen Jack try, and try again, to perfect a curve he is pitching; and you have seen children over and over again cut a figure on the ice or get up after repeated falls in order to learn to stand erect on their skates. You have seen other children give up after the first two or three trials and turn to something else. Obviously it is only through persistent endeavor that an individual can acquire a more or less complex skill.

We must now enquire into this mechanism and see how it works. The first observation one makes is that the child *wants* to play the piece or *wants* to skate, and that the person who gives up doesn't *want* to learn; so one may draw the conclusion that persistence to some degree is based on motivation, which of course it is. But out of the experiences of learning itself there emerges a new want and a new satisfaction. You will recall that in activity there is learning. The child acts in order to satisfy a need. There is an experience of satisfaction when the need is satisfied, but, quite apart from this, there is also the satisfaction in activity itself. When the child has developed to the point where he recognizes the activity as part

of the satisfaction and identifies the activity with himself as a social unit, then this satisfaction becomes greater and greater. In one of my previous letters I discussed the development of the self. The factor of self-appraisal intervenes at this point. We now are dealing with a child who has at his disposal a device by which he may enhance the satisfaction in learning and achieving by the effort he expends in satisfying his motives. I can't emphasize too much the importance of this appreciation of effort. In simple language, we may say the child not only wants to get something, but wants to get it for himself. Interestingly enough, Beth, this mechanism is inherent in the child. If we leave the mechanism alone, he will learn this experience. If we interfere, we may prevent him from learning.

To go a step further in our analysis, we find that when a child is learning he is bound to make mistakes. In other words, his attack is going to be inefficient, because otherwise he would not have to learn. He picks and chooses from his repertoire of behavior those acts which he thinks will lead to the satisfaction of his needs or the fulfilment of his wants; and at times he will choose incorrectly. Such a choice results in failure of satisfaction, or at any rate it prevents success. So, in every learning process, success is the culmination of a series of failures. Success is the final act, preceded by acts which have not been successful. At any time during this performance the individual may decide the particular want is not worth the effort, and may give up. His giving up means that the want remains unfulfilled and the need unsatisfied.

He is at liberty, of course, to make this choice, but if the need is sufficiently urgent, then the failures are just obstacles on the way.

If it is true that the mechanism I mentioned above begins to develop at this time, then the child learns to expect failures as intermediary experiences. The effort expended comes to be recognized as a means of enhancing the value of the goal; and the more difficult the task, the greater the satisfaction. Furthermore, the satisfaction now does not wait upon the final success *but is experienced while the task is going on*. In other words, if satisfaction were confined only to the end result, then the intervening time would be unpleasant and accompanied by impatience and disappointment. If the goal itself is the only satisfying aspect, then the more difficult the task the less desirable becomes the goal. But, as I have just said, the circumstances may be arranged so that the child may derive as much if not more satisfaction in doing than in having done. Also, the more difficult the task the greater the satisfaction. This is a little complex, Beth, but it is likewise important—and I want you to figure it out for yourself.

You may well ask, "If this analysis is valid, why then do we have so much trouble in teaching our children?" The answer lies in the manner in which we teach children and the many ways we interfere with the mechanism described above. Each time we interfere, we delay or indeed prevent the child from experiencing the satisfaction of effort.

How do we interfere? First, we are too prone to assist children because the task seems so easy to us—

for example, putting on shoes, buttoning buttons, drinking from a cup, washing hands, drawing a house, and so on. We fail to realize that the child must learn all these through repetition. If we emphasize success too much and give assistance where we feel time might be saved, then the child too anticipates success and learns that all he need do is to look helpless or clumsy and success will be brought to him without any effort. Thus, for the child a difficulty is not something to overcome but merely an occasion to call for help. You would be surprised, Beth, how frequently we interfere in this way, especially with young children, because we either become impatient or want to save time. Then we become irritated when there is ample time and the child shows no inclination to manifest initiative or industry. After all, time is what the child has "nothing else but."

We interfere in a second way. As soon as the child has become social, that is, has developed self-consciousness, he begins to evaluate the attitude of other social beings about him. After all, for the satisfaction of many of his needs it is important to develop a relationship with others. Through this experience social wants develop. He doesn't *need* to be with his mother all day but may *want* to be. He learns that if he behaves in a certain way, his mother will want to be with him, and he also learns to avoid behavior which deprives him of her companionship.

If you recall my first letter, I wrote about *attitudes* in the social situation. The attitudes of social approach and withdrawal are called approval and dis-

approval. When in the company of another person, we either approve or disapprove. The child is always alert to observe the signs of approval and disapproval in those who are important for his satisfactions. As soon as this experience becomes apparent in the child, the adult very quickly makes use of approval and disapproval as stimulating and inhibiting factors for disciplinary purposes. (We adults often are thoughtless in the use of this device.) It will be clear that approval and disapproval through experience become *incentives* or *wants*. The child *wants* to gain approval and *wants* to avoid disapproval. The urgency of the want or desire is dependent upon the importance in the child's life of the person approving or disapproving. Approval and disapproval are not the only factors concerned in any situation and hence they don't always work. If the goal is most desirable, then the effect of approval and disapproval is minimized.

To get back to our learning situation: if the mother approves of success and disapproves of failure, the efforts of the child now assume additional value. The *want* is not only to satisfy a need but also to achieve approval. The relative potency of these values depends upon experience. For example, the mother may say, "I want you to practice the piano every day to please me." Depending upon the child's experience with his mother, this want may be a determining factor in inducing him to practice. The child's want is "to please mother" not "to practice." Not skill in music is the end, but rather the development of a skill to please mother. The sooner the skill

is learned, the more mother will be pleased. Difficulties are just irritations and the task itself becomes unsatisfying and unpleasant. Practicing becomes more and more a chore to be avoided. The incentive must be increased, so mother bursts into tears. In the end the music lessons are discontinued, to the relief of the child and the disappointment of the mother.

I cannot tell you how many so-called child geniuses I have examined in whom a skill has been developed purely through exaggerated parental approval; cases where, in subsequent years, the parents were disappointed in the non-fulfilment of their high ambitions for the child. Such parents take all the credit for their children's accomplishments, revel in showing them off, then bask in the light of their glory. (I am sure you have never been guilty of this, Beth.)

I have been talking about approval, but disapproval is also a factor. We cannot avoid showing disapproval or approval, either as individuals or as a group; and again we are prone to place a great deal of emphasis on this device for governing the behavior of others. In our western civilization we have placed a great deal of emphasis on success and far too much emphasis on failure. As I have tried to show above, failure is inevitable in any learning situation. The child must learn to enjoy the satisfaction of overcoming difficulties. If, however, we load the dice by adding disapproval to the failure, we drive the child into one of two expedencies. He may either just not try anything difficult for fear he may fail, or he may try to hide his failures by deception. The first alternative

develops in the child timidity, lack of initiative—often called laziness. The second is the cause of lying, copying and other such traits. The child needs far more encouragement or approval in failure than when he has succeeded.

In growing up, to govern one's behavior becomes even more difficult because of the arbitrary nature of the standards of success and failure adopted by the family or community or nation. In Canada (to look no further afield) we place far too much emphasis on the amount of money one has. This is often considered a measure of one's success. You can readily understand how such a standard makes for the inevitable dissatisfaction and disappointment of a great many people. Any such arbitrary standards should be scrutinized carefully—standing in class, respectability, number of prizes or cups on the mantelpiece, the number of degrees, the brilliance of one's uniform, and so on.

You may ask, Are there no standards to be set for the child? Is he to be set free to do whatever he likes?" There is one standard we haven't mentioned, and that is the standard the child sets himself—the *enjoyment of learning*. If we can so train the child that he is fascinated with the acquisition of skill and knowledge and applies these to the satisfaction of his needs in the community in which he lives, then we have done a splendid job. Such an individual is never "finished." There are always tasks to be taken up. Such an individual will never say, "When I am so-and-so many years old I am going to retire." An individual who thinks of retiring, who does not enjoy

effort in any form, is a person who has been fooled into believing success is all-satisfying. Such an individual is bound to learn at last that success is the end—there isn't any more. Many of us learn that too late. I don't think there is any greater tragedy in this world than the spectacle of "successful" people.

Now, Beth, don't become impatient. I am coming around to "power" and, incidentally, I am liking this task.

In one of my earlier letters, when discussing the emotions, I pointed out that of the two fundamental emotions, fear and anger, it was anger that was aroused in a situation where the individual was frustrated from reaching a goal. This, you will perceive at once, is exactly the situation that precedes learning. I also pointed out that anger was a pleasant emotion because in an attack there is obviously an approach attitude. In any well-organized society there is leisure time; and we find that the individuals, partly to occupy leisure time, arrange arbitrary social situations in which anger is deliberately exploited as an enjoyable and thrilling experience. We call such situations games or sports. If you think for a moment, you will realize that all games and most sports are arranged in such a way that the goal is arbitrary and that an arbitrary difficulty or frustration is interposed between the player and this goal.

It is even more exciting if the frustrating object is another human being. In chess, for instance, there is both the mechanical and human frustration. The goal is to check the other person's king; the mechanical frustration is the set of rules and regulations

governing the moves of the pieces; and each player attempts to achieve the goal and to frustrate his opponent. This is an anger situation and hence is thrilling—provided, of course, that the emotion never changes from anger to rage. It is anger under control that is thrilling. Rage is devastating. Notice, I have said nothing about winning the game. This is just an added feature. There must, of course, be some indication as to when the game ends, but winning or losing is not an important part of the enjoyment of the game. The thrill is felt while the game is going on. The enjoyment lies in overcoming the frustration. When the game is over, it is through. But, my dear Beth, you will see at once that I have described the ideal game. As these games are played and taught to our children today, we can only stand aghast at how this mechanism has been perverted. It is the *winning* that is important and the *losing* that must be avoided at all cost. No longer can one keenly enjoy a combat or joust of skill, because one must avoid the humiliation of defeat and be keen for the jubilation of victory.

It is this aspect today which is prostituting human emotions. The football players at a college must go through gruelling practice periods, endure the domination of a coach whose only aim is to win, build up to the final orgy for one split moment at the end when the score board is the most important element in the situation. Then follow hours of despair after losing, or days spent in celebrating with pacans of victory. Nothing can be more distressing than the sight of seventy-five thousand people watching

twenty-two others putting forth their greatest effort—for what?

The explanation of the perversion of emotional enjoyment lies in communal approval and disapproval. Woe to the vanquished, hail the victor! It is easy to understand that the force of approval, in so far as it is a socially derived incentive, is multiplied by the number of persons involved. What must be the feelings of the twenty-two gladiators when they feel they can influence seventy-five thousand people at one time? This, Beth, is the source of the feeling of power. Power is a term we apply to the individual's experience when he feels that he can control other human beings. It acts like a stimulating drug. One can become devoted to that experience even more than to the most potent drug addiction. When the child first shows off and learns that he can for a moment control the attention of even one person, he feels a sense of power. The more people involved, the greater the feeling of power.

By the same token a community arranges situations for exploiting the emotion of fear. In this instance the arranged element is danger. There is the same thrill in emotional control; there are the same rules and the same frustration. Boxing, mountain climbing, wrestling, hunting, and so on are such sports. Similarly, the game may be enjoyed and may be thrilling if the end does not become too important by social emphasis.

When one can combine both fear and anger, the game is even more thrilling. That is why football has such an appeal. I need not point out to you, who

no doubt have been reading the reports of football in the University of Pittsburgh, what an enormous influence for the worse this game has on our youth today. The University of Chicago belatedly has taken a step in the right direction. It is significant, however, that they were forced into this step at a time when they were losing. It would be of far greater influence if Notre Dame would take similar measures.

We have been trying, in the training of our children, to make them "good losers"—and, conversely, "good winners." There is no such animal. We should not be interested in losing or winning. We are only interested in *playing*. It is an exploded myth that the battles of England were won on the playing fields of Eton. Much more credit should be given to the attitudes in the humbler walks of life. I must say, however, that the English sports gallery is far more interested in commending skill on the field, by whichever team, than our American or Canadian crowds. They are learning the lesson more quickly than we on this side.

It is inevitable that any child in growing up should feel the thrill of power. At least the parents are interested in him. When power becomes an incentive independent of its origin or means of attainment, then it becomes dangerous. A violinist, pianist, actor, lecturer, or author who can hold the attention of his audience has a feeling of power which is justified because, first, he has acquired a skill which commands attention, and secondly, he has no ulterior motive other than manifesting his skill. His power is subordinate to his skill. But when an individual uses

other and indirect means for gaining control—for furthering, that is, some motive unconnected with his skill—this is a base use and leads to social disruption. The most obvious device to gain such power is by the use of force. But, as I have indicated before, propaganda is also a method for the gaining of power, especially if one can persuade other individuals that the ulterior motive is desirable. “To win at all costs” is the slogan of the seeker after power for its own sake.

You can see, Beth, why I was interested in the postscript to your letter. War is an arbitrary social situation in which not only fear and anger but all of the later (the derived) emotions are stimulated. Through propaganda, war, once it has been declared, can never be base in the eyes of the majority. The thrill of anger can be self-righteous and danger situations can lead to greater glory. No wonder there are individuals who think of war in the same sense as they do of a wild-boar hunt or a game of chess or a game of football. The yell of the crowds in the rooters’ section is often “Fight, fight, fight!” War is *not* a game; but to convince peoples of all nations that war is necessary, children have been trained to *win* and to *want* to win by having instilled in them from infancy a desire and thirst for power which in games can be achieved only at the expense of someone else.

This, Beth, is the tragedy of our emotional training. If the time arrives when, instead of seventy-five thousand watching twenty-two, there will be perhaps twenty-two disgruntled “gentlemen of the old school” watching the seventy-five thousand from the side-

lines; when we bury the records of sports for the past hundred years in the cornerstone of a building, so that they may serve only as a record for some distant generation to mull over and realize how stupid *we* have been; and when the newspapers will devote their pages to discussion of skill in terms of appreciation rather than "league standing": then we may expect a generation of children to grow up who will be interested in competition only as a means to the legitimate enjoyment of their emotions. This ideal is still a long way off; and in the meantime we must endure such catastrophes as wars, strikes, and riots, because these follow as a consistent panorama the examples and standards we are setting our children today.

Power is a double-edged weapon. It can be used legitimately if it does not depend on force and other irrelevant factors. When it becomes the dominating want of an individual, it demonstrates its double-edged nature by turning on him and destroying him. History repeats itself in this respect at least.

Yours,

Bill

P. S. Just the other day a friend of mine, whose son attends high school, stopped me in the street. He had been to the annual "Parents' Night" the evening before. As is the custom, the principal took longer than the time allotted for his speech. He spoke in part as follows: "Parents, we have had a very successful year.

Our football team won five of its six games—that is, the first team. Our second team won all its games. Our basketball team won the district championship. Our fencing team came through the season undefeated. Our hockey team won the Memorial Cup. Our cross-country team was victorious again for the sixth season in succession. A glorious record! We also have a music club and a chess club. Perhaps we have too many clubs.” My friend, whose boy is not an athlete, was quite concerned about it. What do *you* think?

VIII. MILITARY TOYS

Dear Bill:

Your last letter started a heated argument. If that is what you intended, you were certainly successful. I tried to defend your position, but either I am a very poor arguer or a poor disciple, for I found I was getting the worst of it all along the line. Don says that, if it wasn't for winning, 99% of the players would not turn out to play—and George said, "Well, if he thinks so much of failure, then what is wrong with losing? If you win you get the prize, and if you lose you build up character," and I must say I did not know the answers to these points. Perhaps you can clarify this for me.

There is another thing about these troublous times that struck me rather forcibly. Last Saturday afternoon we had one of our blizzards, which, as you know, make our climate so delightful—in the summer time—and I happened to pass the playroom and saw Jack, all alone, sitting on the floor with his soldiers lined up opposite him, shooting at them with his toy cannon. After every volley he would say, "Take that, you darned Germans." There has been a good deal of discussion about toys and I understand there are associations which further the idea of keeping mili-

tary toys away from children. I am wondering whether there is any harm in permitting Jack to play with his soldiers?

At the bridge club, the other afternoon, where we talked a lot between hands as usual, the question of democracy came up. And as usual, we did not get anywhere. I would like to know what we can do about children in order to teach them that democracy is something more than just a name. I know this is a pretty big order, but in spite of our arguments you have at least given us something to think about, so you might as well continue.

Yours,

Beth

Dear Beth:

It must be quite evident to you, on thinking over the controversy that raged in connection with my last letter, how deep-seated is the idea of personal power in our modern upbringing.

As a matter of fact I think it is quite true that if we were to take away the value of winning, artificially stimulated by prizes and newspaper publications, probably 99% of those now participating would find their activities rather lifeless. But if we were to train our children that the participation is interesting, then we would have 99% more participants. Today the 99% are sitting in the stands and yelling while the 1% are doing the participating.

If any one thing bears out my contention that the

desire for power results from training and is not an innate desire in itself, it is the tenacity with which our children and we grown-ups hold to the idea that glory in winning is all too desirable.

The ideas in my last letter were not just "theory." The plan really works. In a camp for boys and girls in Northern Ontario where until recently badges and prizes were given to the children for winning competitions in the various camp activities of swimming, canoeing, sailing, and so on, it was decided to get rid of all trophies and make participation "its own reward." To the surprise of the councillors, but not to mine, more children participated in more activities than before. Whereas formerly the children would confine their efforts to an activity in which they thought they might excel and hence win a prize, now we find that the children are willing to try anything, because no matter what their performance they know there will be no invidious distinction made to crown their efforts, whether excellent or poor. The effort they expend is wholly in terms of the satisfaction they get in acquiring the particular skill to whatever degree they please. There is, of course, competition. There are sailing races, diving exhibitions, and so on, but there is no prize—and no champion. Each child is interested in doing his best, but not to "beat" someone.

As for George's statement that failure builds up character, that is only one side of the picture. It is success *and* failure that build up character; but the success depends on persistent effort and not on some value placed by an outsider, and the failure is not

failure in the eyes of the populace but failure as interpreted by the learner who feels his own inadequacy and gets a thrill out of overcoming it. Failure and success as judged by other people are often spurious values. I think it rather amusing to see the downcast look on the faces of the rooting section after a football game in which their team has lost. And mind you, these are not children but grown-ups. One would imagine at times that the fate of the universe depended on the dexterity of the toe that is about to try for the winning point after a touchdown.

You know, Beth, in a nursery school we expect the children, when they come in at the age of two years, to spend a good deal of their time watching the other older children of three, four and five. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, though, by the time the child has reached the age of three he spends little of his time in watching the others because he is more interested in doing the things himself. One criticism of present-day education is that we force the children as they get older to revert to the two-year-old level of behavior. The average spectator at any kind of game is interested in nothing else but the winning or losing of *someone else*. He is really acting at the level of a two-year-old development. The mature individual is far more interested in doing the thing himself, and when he *does* observe, he is interested in the skill that is being manifested. He uses this experience to aid in furthering his own skill either of a motor or an intellectual kind. When you go to a museum to see the pictures, you are not interested in whether Grant Wood can paint ten pictures while

somebody else paints only five, nor are you interested in adding up the points and placing a score on the picture; you are interested only in the product as a witness of the skill of the artist, and you are filled not only with admiration of that skill but with the enjoyment it gives you in further understanding those aspects of civilization which are perhaps most worthy of approval.

As far as toys are concerned, we are now in the midst of a revolution which I hope will be bloodless. That revolution is in our more efficient understanding of child development. We have to teach children to be busy, not to "play." Formerly, the main idea was to keep them happy and unobtrusive. If children did not bother us too much, we felt we were being successful, and when they would become restless and uproarious we assumed that any technique which quieted them down or, as we put it, "kept them quiet," was successful. As I have said in one of my previous letters, the child is interested in things that are new; and because they have very little background of experience, it is easy to keep on introducing new things to children. This form of influencing children is called *entertainment*. It is relatively easy to entertain children for the reason I have just given, in that anything new interests them—for a short time. All you have to do is make a face, which is something new; but there are limitations to the number of faces one individual can make, and the child must then turn to someone else.

Heretofore it was thought that what you bought for the entertainment of children were toys. The

value of toys was judged by the number of new forms the toy could automatically take. A great deal of adult ingenuity was expended over toys which would go through all sorts of gyrations. Modern child study holds the view that, first, toys which entertain the child prevent him from learning how to interest himself, and second, that the majority of toys are created by adults to please adults. After all, it is the adults who buy them, and in most toy shops the display is arranged to catch the adult eye. If you have ever been in a toy shop, especially before Christmas, you can understand that until the adult exhausts his own interest in the particular toy, many a child will have to wait to get a chance at it.

In modern child education the word "toy" is not used. *Material* is substituted for this term. In other words, we are concerned with arranging for the child to have at hand some form of material which he can change, which he can manipulate and out of which, through the development of his skill, he is creating new things. Clay, wood, paper and scissors, glue and colored paper and paste, hammer and saws, are now the materials and the tools which the modern child should have at his disposal, not "toys." The fashion for manufacturing dolls which represent some specific individual tends to restrict the imagination of the child. A doll is best suited for the child if it is anonymous. The fewer specific qualities it possesses, the more can the child add by imagination. This activity, of course, is as much a form of manipulation of ideas as if the child were moulding in plasticine. So the only evaluation one can make of any *thing*

which the child happens to be busy with is in terms of its creative potentialities. The actual content or form does not really matter.

We may now specifically discuss miniature instruments of war. (The vogue of these, by the way, has received a great impetus during the past few months, and perhaps the past few years.) The only criticism that can be directed against them is that they often restrict imagination. This, however, is not necessarily so. To think that they stimulate in a child a military attitude is an overstatement. If toy soldiers, say, were the only circumstance suggestive of military and warlike ideas, then perhaps one might develop an argument for their elimination; but when we think of our magazines and our parades and our radio broadcasts and our insignia and our uniforms and so on, we find military toys fading into insignificance as progenitors of a warlike attitude. Furthermore, if we eradicated them we would have to go through a much more difficult form of censorship by deleting from our history and fiction and poetry all ideas of military matters. Perhaps you recall what I said before on censorship. In other words, it never succeeds in diminishing the value of the thing censored, but rather the opposite—it enhances the appeal.

As far as Jack is concerned, there is no especial harm in his playing with his lead soldiers; but it is interesting that he should accompany his play with a rather emphatic expression of disapproval. This attitude, it is obvious, did not emerge from the toy soldiers. It arose from his being exposed to an atmosphere of belligerency. So it is rather unfair to blame

the toys for a condition for which the social surroundings are to blame, if blame there is. To take another instance, there are some parents who become upset when their children participate in that very common game called "cops and robbers." They would be astonished to note how often, in a group, the child's first choice is for the rôle of robber rather than of cop; but again this cannot be blamed on the form of the game. The children read the newspapers and go to the movies and are struck with the fact that "cops and robbers" when "played" by adults is a far more exciting social custom than their own play activity.

If we wish to direct our energies at all, surely there is ample opportunity for constructive thinking in the elimination of cops and robbers from among the adults. In other words, Beth, as so frequently happens, we find that individuals are a little reluctant to think below the surface. It is easy to treat symptoms, but to spend time in diagnosing the disease is readily postponed or thought of as someone else's job. How many of us take an aspirin when we have a headache and avoid considering the fact that a headache is a sign that something has gone wrong in the biological economy? We all think there is something wrong with the head—and unfortunately there is often some truth in this diagnosis.

You ask me, "What is democracy?" and I feel like saying, "I'll bite, what is it?" Whatever one's definition, I am quite sure the factors that should be considered are principally psychological, rather than economic or political. Or should I say that the funda-

mental basis of the organization of any society consists of the psychological characteristics of the individuals who form that society? Government, taxation, representation, budgeting, free speech—these are all aspects of political organization. Yet here I am reminded of the mother who called me up after the pediatrician had outlined for her a specific diet according to all the latest laws of nutrition and biology. Half in tears, she said, "But he left without telling me how to get this diet into the child."

I am one of those who feel that the actual *form* of our social organization is not as important as the manner in which individuals are trained to satisfy their motives within the form or plan. I have indicated in a previous letter that social organization is arbitrary; that in order for a group to maintain its integrity, the individual must learn to conform to some arbitrary rules, but that these arbitrary rules must never deny to the individual an opportunity of satisfying his motives within the compass of the rules themselves. I think the conflict inherent in the situation causes all the difficulty about which most of the controversy rages. There are those who say that if we only permitted children to be uninhibited, perhaps they would be more willing to accept restrictions when they are adults. This is the philosophy of the school of self-expression. There are others who say the thing to do is to start in early and repress all inclination towards self-expression, whereupon the children will make ideal citizens. Either extreme not only makes theory easy but the outlining of a practice clear cut. Unfortunately for those theories, nei-

ther one works out in practice—the individual being what he is.

Actually, the answer lies half-way between these two; and that is why it is so difficult. I would define a democracy as any form of social organization which trains *individuals* to fit into an acceptable scheme of social living, but which, depending on his willingness to accept responsibility for the maintenance of the group integrity, holds out to *the individual* an opportunity for wide discretionary choice. Furthermore, in my conception of democracy, as the individual accepts responsibilities he acquires the privilege of changing whatever he sees fit of the arbitrary rules and regulations under which he is expected to live. This, Beth, is a rather cumbersome definition; but the emphasis, you will note, is on the training in the first place. Or in other words, there is an obligation to maintain a consistent philosophy throughout life—not one philosophy that applies to children, another to adolescents, another to young adults, and another to the elders themselves. The emphasis, in the second place, is on the necessity of continuous change. Any tendency to stabilize any form because of tradition is a denial of democracy.

In a democracy there is, first, the responsibility for training children to be citizens, together with the privilege on the part of citizens to change the form of their organization. Perhaps it is difficult to envisage a democracy in such general terms as I have indicated. It is always easier to adopt a slogan—and then find oneself defending that slogan, such as “freedom of the press.” As a matter of fact, there is no such

thing as *freedom* of the press. There are certain rules of accuracy and decency to which we expect the press to conform. By freedom, which is obviously a misuse of the term in this connection, we mean that as long as the press conforms to certain rules, publicists are permitted to express themselves in any manner they are willing to defend, and for which they are willing to accept the consequences. So it is with freedom of the individual. The more willing he is to accept responsibilities, obviously the less free he is. The only free person is the new-born infant—and his freedom does him very little good. So also with government by representation.

In the last analysis, the only government which any individual really practices is self-discipline. The individuals for whom he votes are really servants of the people; but I don't think it is necessary for me to point out that invariably the mere raising of an individual to an elective office is accompanied in him by the feeling that he is master and not servant. This is, of course, the result of faulty training. So too with a change in laws. There is seldom a sufficiently large body of the voting mass that is either intelligent enough or sufficiently informed to have a considered opinion on any law. The result is that a few individuals who have an ulterior purpose to serve adopt the technique I have discussed under the heading of propaganda, and thus influence the people to vote for reasons other than the immediate popular interest. This too results from faulty education and training.

In essence, such a democracy as I have envisaged

will work as long as people are intelligent and are intelligently trained. We are still a long way from this ideal; but there is no sense in holding the ideal at fault for the shortcomings of the individuals who are attempting to make it work. Groups of individuals—or rather, nations—are in many ways like the individuals themselves. They come into being and go through a period of training or infancy and experimentation, which is adolescence, and of maturity, which is full adult life. No nation yet has reached this full, mature, adult stage. Some, indeed, still are infantile.

Any national group which considers that the end justifies the means may reach this end more quickly, and apparently more efficiently, by adopting some form of government in which a few people, intelligent or not, choose to be leaders. By the use of various emotional devices and by prostituting certain human values it is possible to arrange a dictatorship. Undoubtedly, in certain respects a dictatorship accomplishes social ends in an efficient manner; but there is a denial always of the right of the individual to request a change or to desire one. In this way a totalitarian state differs from a democracy. It is rather trite to say that “a group of individuals live under the kind of government they deserve,” because in the first place their training is such as to preclude any experience which would make it possible for them to understand what other benefits they may derive. Second, as in a totalitarian state, whether it be Fascist, Nazi, Bolshevik, or any other form of autocracy, there is an influence, far less subtle than propaganda,

which is resorted to by the leaders: the unbridled use of force. For this reason it seems harsh to condemn a people among whom the expression of opinion is tantamount to suicide.

Under a democracy there could not be any form of imperialistic aggrandisement. A democracy, in so far as it is self-limiting, can have no immediate concern with another group. Any form of evangelism or the sending of missionaries, warlike or peaceful, has no place in a true democracy. The responsibilities and privileges of the members of their own group should be an example but not a compulsion for whatever other groups there are. A democracy, however, can defend itself from interference by other individuals. For this reason it is reasonable to suppose that true democracies may fight defensive wars but never any other. That, it seems to me, is why at the present day so much importance is attached to the identity of an aggressor in the event of international complications. At least the *idea* of a democracy seems to be spreading.

Now you may ask, Beth, what all this has got to do with the training of children. It is, perhaps, more important than anything else to train your child to be an effective citizen. This cannot be done by preaching patriotism or by stimulating national arrogance. It can be accomplished only by emphasizing in your training the two aspects I have already mentioned: by pointing out that with every privilege there is a responsibility, and that privileges may sometimes be obtained through some subterfuge without accepting the responsibility—but that this

method of gaining a privilege is not acceptable in the society in which you live.

Today, in our scheme of civilization, it is difficult to set an example within the family alone, because traditionally the family is a totalitarian state. Not that it need be so; but from my knowledge of parents I have met, there appears still to be a common belief that the father is head of the household. The feminist movement has done something to shake the foundation of this belief, but, where successful, has only substituted the mother for the father in the place of authority. It is a debatable question whether the family can ever be a democracy. Yet, if a democracy is what I tried to describe above, not only is this possible, but it will make for closer family responsibility, in so far as every individual accepts responsibility within his capacity and enjoys the privileges he earns.

The teaching of responsibility starts in the cradle. The simple situation of permitting a child to eat or not—and if he does not, he goes hungry—and if he does, he is satisfied—is the beginning of acceptance of responsibility. And this training program goes on until the time comes when the parent no longer needs to accept responsibility for the child's behavior. During the period of learning, while the parents still accept responsibility, they have the privilege of laying down certain arbitrary rules. But the implication is always patent that as soon as a child is willing to accept responsibility himself these arbitrary rules are no longer enforced. In this way we avoid all the discussions centering around "rights": has the father

any rights; has the mother any rights; and have the children any rights? Rights are only privileges which the individual either earns or enjoys through the use of superior skill. If for "right" were substituted the word "deserts," then it would be easier to work out a plan of social organization.

Often, as the child grows up, it is difficult for him to distinguish between government and governors. Government is a scheme arranged for the regulation of human behavior. Governors are the individuals who, through some means or other, attain a position where they are responsible for administration. The larger the social group, the more complex becomes the administration; and the more difficult it is to understand, the easier it is for individuals who have not accepted the philosophy of responsibility and privilege to introduce chicanery and skullduggery. We may criticize the totalitarian states for the efforts they are expending on the training of children, but we could very well take a leaf out of their book and emphasize in childhood the need for self-discipline as a criterion for understanding *democratic* governing. I am afraid, however, that when we begin, as has happened in a great many localities, to organize courses in civics, we often fight shy of an explicit description of how government is carried on or administered, because of the shame we feel at its undemocratic character.

The only way one can learn is by practice. In the majority of instances children are afforded very little opportunity for practicing self-discipline, with the

result that when they grow up and attain what we call adult stature, confusing freedom with license, they find, too, that in practice the mechanics of government falls far short of any ideals which they have managed to envisage during their period of training. I hope you don't feel I am too pessimistic, because I am not. According to my theory, we learn through our mistakes.

Fundamentally, a democracy is the only form of government that an intelligent individual can accept. The only people who approve of any form of totalitarian government are those who happen, at the time, to be in a position to dictate, and whose training has taught them a perverted sense of values. In a democracy the end never justifies the means.

There is one point which I might bring out in connection with the responsibility of a democratic state for the training of its young. We hear agitation for the centralization of educational responsibilities. In an ideal democratic state it would naturally follow that there would be a hierarchy of responsibility, centering ultimately in an administrative body at its head. I don't feel that, as nations, either we or you have progressed to the point where, as a group, we are sufficiently mature to place such confidence in any small body. As evidence of this may be cited the case of the requirement of oaths of allegiance, and the censoring of textbooks which from time to time is threatened by administrators in various localities. If individuals of such mentality happened to be in a position of supreme authority, there would not be a

voice of protest from other sections of the community to level out our customs (witness Germany and the S. S. Guards).

However, this is a moot point, a controversy which perhaps has no place in this immediate discussion. I would say, however, that even with the incompetence, inefficiency and venality that we read about in the newspapers, almost daily, as associated with democratic countries, I still feel these shortcomings can never be used as an argument for dictatorship of any kind. Such behavior patterns are part and parcel of the individual, not of the state, and it is our responsibility to see that individuals are trained to accept responsibility; but we should not expect or assert that human nature itself is subject to these delinquencies *per se*.

Individual behavior is determined by training, part of which is the acceptance of values. We who deal with children can through our example and teaching set standards of value which the child may or may not accept; but he is more likely to accept our values if he has learned to like to live in the manner we present to him. And so I will say again that the efficacy of our influence depends on the example we can hold up as either acceptable or not. Our preachings are often accepted by the child as alibis and rationalizations, which in the majority of cases they certainly are.

I hope you have been able to guess that the kind of discipline which I tried to point out in my fifth letter is especially directed towards the development

of responsibility and the acceptance of privilege only after privileges have been earned. For this reason, the scheme is admirably suited for training in a democracy. Quite frankly, I don't know of any other scheme that would work.

Yours,

Bill

IX. THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

Dear Bill:

It seems to me that in your last letter you gave the idea of "keeping up with the Joneses" quite a jolt. I for one am inclined to believe you are right—but it is difficult to practice what you preach, isn't it?

Whatever you may say, at the present time the ambition to have a bigger car or a newer sofa, or to see your sons better educated than your neighbors', is an incentive to progress. If you are going to have people tolerant and compromising and co-operating all the time, isn't that going to cramp people's ambitions? Isn't it the drive to "beat someone" that keeps us going, the getting-something-that-we-want-in-spite-of-anything spirit?

The other day, as we were sitting around the living room after dinner, George said to his father, "Dad, what do you want me to be when I grow up?" Don looked at me and winked and said, "I would like you to be a good man." George said, "Well, don't you want me to make a lot of money?" His father said, "No." "Don't you want me to be a famous man?" His father said, "No." This went on in the form of a catechism until I interrupted and said, "Well, now, Don, are we being honest? Have we actually sat down

and discussed what *we* want George to be? Isn't it more important to consider George's interests rather than our deciding for him?" Jack piped up and said he wanted to be a policeman and Victoria said she just wanted to be a lady.

Finally we settled the argument by saying Don and I would do everything we could to help each one prepare for whatever calling was satisfying.

After George had gone out to basketball practice and the other three were in bed, Don and I began to ask ourselves what it was we wanted of our children. Here we were, both over forty, Don successful enough in a profession which, although interesting, at times bores him. Here am I, rather proud of the way I get along with a circle of friends who are as intelligent as myself, but I must confess that at times I am bored too. I "kid" myself at times that we are working away primarily to bring up our children; but at some time in the future they will marry, and I wonder what Don and I will do then? Should we have plans? One can suggest, of course, travel, summer holidays, reading and so on, but at times I wonder what we should be working towards in this life.

Mind you, I am still interested in the after-life, which I believe in. Anything we do should not be inconsistent with a so-called good life, but I don't think that should prevent us from inquiring more deeply into what we should be doing *here*. If this isn't too confused, I would like to know what you have to say about it.

Yours,

Beth

Dear Beth:

At last we have come to the crux of the matter. What does one pursue, in "the pursuit of happiness"? For that (although not in so many words) is what you have asked me now. "Fools rush in"—so here goes.

It is interesting how frequently we encounter the problem of purpose. Here it is again, yet in this case we are not concerned with *why* people live the way they do, but rather with the question of *what people want*. The two problems, of course, are closely related. The question may be stated in the form, "What do people want?" This may be answered in a great many ways—happiness, contentment, satisfaction, success, serenity, peace, and so on. The difficulty arising when one answers this question so simply is that, in the first place, one has to define what these various terms mean, and second, it is a commonplace that when one gets what one wants, one is seldom completely satisfied.

Do you remember, in Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird*, how the characters wander around for five acts looking for happiness, only to discover they were more satisfied when they were back where they started from?

If you have accepted what I have been trying to tell you up to date, you will recall that I differentiated between a motive or need and a goal or want. The motives are common to all people, but the goal or incentive is the individual's interpretation of his own need. Our needs are common. Our wants are individual and personal. All children are hungry, but

through experience some want cereal, others French toast, and others Zwieback. In each case this food satisfies the same need, but, through learning, each individual wants something different. Next I pointed out that each of us had to interpret our needs by the experience we have in connection with each one of them, and that we had to interpret through experience what particular thing would satisfy this need. We may be mistaken in both these interpretations. When we are hungry we may think we are tired, or vice versa. If we really are hungry, we may think we want a steak, only to discover afterwards that we wished we had eaten a salad. This discrepancy presents a challenge to the psychologist as well as to the individual—so illusory are our wants.

Furthermore, although the needs remain stable our wants grow in number and expand in variety almost to infinity. A child at first wants only his milk to satisfy hunger, but if he grows into an epicure his wants in connection with this one need, if written down, would fill a library. Just think of the size of our cook books.

A young child is seldom perturbed about the *variety* of his wants. His concern is usually over the difficulty in *getting*. But as he grows older he finds that the simple wants of childhood no longer satisfy; and the more intelligently he considers the expansion of his wants, the more likely is he to arrive at the situation in which you find yourself now. You are wondering not about the wants of the moment but the wants of the future. Your consideration of the problem is a sign of maturity. I don't have to tell you,

Beth, that many suggestions have been put forth attempting to solve for people the problem of an abiding want or goal. Suggestion, in this instance, is an understatement, because in a number of cases the plan is not suggested but insisted upon.

Before we go into this matter, we must divide people into two great classes. First, there are those who think life is a relatively short interlude anticipating eternity; and second, those who think life is complete in itself and eternity is only a term applied to a concept of time. At present, the majority fall into the first classification. Christianity upholds this doctrine. According to this view the goal is simple: eternal salvation to one who believes whole-heartedly in this doctrine. There are few problems. All decisions are made in terms of the eternal reward; it is only where faith wavers that there is any indecision. I need not take time to present the evidence surrounding us which points to a rather frequent wavering in this respect. Obviously there seems to be a great deal of difficulty in reconciling our immediate wants with our ultimate goal.

And those in the second class also have a simple formula: eat, drink and be merry, tomorrow we may be dead. But the exponents of this doctrine also find it difficult, because the boredom that follows upon sensory indulgence is even more difficult to endure than self-denial. Within this group one often finds suggestions of a biological goal; for example, the propagation of the race is suggested as an end in itself. Because this goal is directly concerned with the appetite of sex, one can see how easily contradictions

may arise in the standards of any group. The modern Freudian doctrine is based on the importance of this goal. One could with equal justification base a philosophy on the appetite of hunger, or even of elimination. Biology is no more successful than theology in answering this question for an individual who seeks beyond a previously accepted formula.

Let us see whether psychology is any more successful in answering our needs. As I have indicated before, it is not only difficult but impossible to study the question of *purpose* in a scientific way. On the other hand, it is possible to look around you and note those individuals who seem to be pursuing a course which is not only satisfying to themselves, but which contributes to the satisfaction of others. Of course, one can find those who do not fit into this category. Keep in mind that, in formulating categories and thereby classifying people, you are always setting up an arbitrary standard. In some cases it is easy to set up such a standard. The psychiatrist uses his judgment in diagnosing the condition of certain individuals whom he classifies as psychotics. In legal terms, such an individual is insane; in common parlance, he is crazy. Aside from such professional judgments, each of us has his own individual standard of normality. Anyone who departs from such a standard, we consider abnormal. Often our own behavior is our standard; and people who differ from us are then considered a little queer. However, at this point we are not concerned with psychiatric standards, because after all relatively few individuals fall into these

categories of serious illnesses. We do not consider the great majority of people as abnormal.

One might say that happiness and unhappiness are categories. Can one classify people in this fashion? When is an individual happy? Is an individual happy when he is satisfied and/or vice versa? Happiness or unhappiness may be defined in a great number of ways. Remember that living organisms are never static. They never stay put. There is no such thing as a status quo. When one talks about "satisfactions" and "happiness," one is only talking about a very transitory condition or state. No matter what the definition of happiness, it cannot be a continuous state of mind. No matter what one considers "satisfying," it cannot be a continuous or perpetual performance. That is why these terms are often confusing.

It is obvious that if an individual sets out to satisfy a desire, let us say to graduate from high school, to bake a cake, to perform an operation, to arrange a holiday, the completion of such a task and the satisfaction of the want are gratifying; but then one has to start all over again.

Can one think of a want which is continuous and lasts throughout life; a want which is always directing an individual's behavior? If so, can one describe it and perhaps, if necessary, control it? In seeking such a want one must recognize that it must be dynamic. If it is static, then undoubtedly it can be completed. The individual will be disappointed or dissatisfied if his wants are incomplete; and if he *does* achieve them, then he is back where he was before.

It seems to me that this is precisely the problem that is inadequately dealt with by a scheme of living which considers sex the dominant factor, or which makes the achievement of any special goal the motivating principle. An individual who makes the accumulation of a million dollars his main want will be disappointed if he doesn't achieve this sum—and will be let down after he has achieved it. If the parents decide they will wait until after the children are grown up and married to have a good time traveling, they find the anticipation was much more gratifying than the realization. It is so with every goal which is achieved within one's lifetime.

Mr. Chant, a colleague of mine here in Toronto, and myself have been working for the last seven or eight years on a scheme which, so we feel, satisfies the requirements of a standard such as I have just laid down: a principle by which human behavior may be governed through motivation of the individual. According to this principle, the immediate situation is one of gratification, but is immediately altered by the circumstance itself so that further motivation ensues. The gratification is changed in direction but continuous in its appreciation. We have named this principle *security*.

I will try briefly to expound this scheme for you. You must remember that it is still untried in many of its aspects. Although we already have, to prove our stand, some data which might be called scientific, it is by no means a well-rounded scheme as yet.

One might start out by saying that an individual is continuously seeking security. To begin with a

definition, security is the state of mind of an individual who is willing to accept the consequences of the choice of his behavior. In other words, the projection of his immediate need is into the future and not into the past. He is not seeking a device which will help him to avoid the consequences of his behavior because therein lies safety. Safety is not his ultimate aim. Safety is a static phenomenon, whereas security is a dynamic one. Safety and security are too often confused in modern thinking. (This will become clearer, I hope, as we go along.) It is well to note, however, that security is a state of mind; and states of mind, as you know, never stand still. An individual is either secure or insecure. When he is insecure, he is anticipating a consequence to his behavior which he is unwilling to accept and hence seeking to avoid by some means.

Security can be attained in two ways, and therefore we can talk about two kinds of security: dependent security and independent security. An individual is said to be dependently secure when he knows or feels that someone or something other than himself will accept the consequences of his behavior, or when he is willing to accept the consequences if somebody else makes them acceptable. Hence he is free to choose or select any act, irrespective of the consequences. Thus a child is dependently secure, because during infancy the child's field of activity is not inhibited by the necessity of accepting consequences. The parent is there to see that consequences of either an unpleasant or serious nature are prevented from happening to him. This dependent security of the child is recog-

nized and has been described by many authors under other names. It is often called the feeling of belonging, or the feeling of stability; but these terms do not go deeply enough into the value of this phenomenon itself.

By definition, dependent security is a satisfying state of mind. You might ask, Why does the child ever "get out from under"? Why doesn't he remain in this condition of dependent security and go through life that way? As a matter of fact, some children *do* attempt to maintain this state; and it is the behavior manifested in such an attempt at remaining dependently secure that gives rise to sundry of the problems of child training. The psychoanalytic system interprets this persistence of dependence as a sexual attraction between the parent and child, and so misses the implications of its deeper significance. Sex is only one of the appetites, as I have pointed out to you; to make it either the only one or the most significant of the factors involved is to disregard all the others, such as hunger or thirst.

In the growth and development of the child, whatever happens depends on a psychological function which is all-important, the *phenomenon of learning*. As I have indicated, learning is a function of all organic life. It is the symbol of change and it is the basis of the dynamic structure of life. It is well to keep in mind that learning is an impelling function and cannot be inhibited. (I know there are many teachers who will question this statement.) I pointed out that learning takes place when the individual feels inadequate. This inadequacy is the state of

mind of the individual when, under the influence of some motivation, he finds his own skill inadequate. Learning begins with his attempts at satisfying his motive; or if he has already had sufficient experience to envisage or anticipate *what* will satisfy him, then we talk about reaching for a goal or gratifying a desire. The desire or wish or goal is, of course, learned. One cannot talk about an innate desire. One cannot talk about an unconscious wish. The motive determines the selection of behavior. The incentive is what the individual thinks will satisfy the motive, which can never be conscious, because it is only a concept which the psychologist has used to describe an organic phenomenon. If it were possible to satisfy, at the moment of its manifestation, every motive generated within the individual, then learning need not take place. However, since this is obviously impossible, learning begins with the beginning of life.

The beginning of learning is accompanied by the feeling of insecurity, because the individual appreciates his own inadequacy and is ignorant of consequences. So the individual acts, and, in striving to satisfy the motive and attain the goal, he acquires skill. He is also learning what the consequences of his choice of behavior will be. He can accept or withdraw from these consequences because of the innate attitudes that I have already described. If he accepts, he proceeds and learns; if he withdraws, that particular learning program is inhibited. Since more than one motive is always operating at the same time, the resultant attitude will be in terms of the predominating motive; and so it is possible for the in-

dividual to overcome the incipient withdrawal attitude under the influence of a more potent motive which demands acceptance or attack. Having reached the goal, the individual is again secure. Through the process of learning, he has experienced the thrill of insecurity, and he has overcome this insecurity through his own efforts. We may say the child has achieved security through the acquisition of a skill, and that this skill makes him secure not only because he has achieved a goal but also because he has now learned that the consequences of his behavior in such a situation will be acceptable if he persists in his attack. In other words, in a similar situation in the future, the individual will no longer feel insecure. Rather, he will feel secure, in that he may decide to attack because his skill will make it possible for him to deal with the consequences which, he has learned, will arise. In this way the child, as he grows up, learns that although dependent security is a satisfying state of mind, independent security is more satisfying, because not only has a motive been gratified but there has also been the experience of temporary insecurity and the emotional fillip it has engendered. We may now understand the circumstances under which a child will voluntarily leave the protective wing of the parent and strike out for himself.

As you can see, there is an infinite variety of complexities which may arise in a child-parent relationship. If the parent attempts to *anticipate* the wants of the child, there may be a reluctance on the part of the child to accept a state of insecurity, because he has not learned what the acquisition of a skill im-

plies. As the child grows up and is permitted a reasonably free rein in acquiring independent security, there comes a time when his dependent security within the parental orbit gradually disappears. Such, of course, is a desirable condition. Any prolongation of this dependence interferes with the growth of independence.

Also, and more important, all forms of dependent security are subject to a crisis or catastrophe. Whatever one depends upon cannot be considered perpetual. The parent may die, in which case the child, or the adult who has not learned to be independent, is suddenly thrust into a situation of insecurity for which he is unprepared. He has not learned how to deal with it. Independent security cannot be achieved without learning. He is inclined then to grab at some other person upon whom he may depend—a parent substitute. The behavior of a dependent individual who has suddenly lost the object upon which he was depending accounts for a great deal of so-called pathological behavior. Excessive grief, for instance, is always an expression of insecurity following upon the loss of an object of dependence; and its intensity is an indication of the degree of the previous dependence.

You may well ask, "Can an individual become completely, independently secure?" The answer, of course, is No! Because independent security, such as I have described here, can only be achieved if the individual has acquired sufficient skill to deal with every possible situation that might arise in life. Such an individual would have to be omnipotent. He

would also have to be able to analyze all of the consequences following upon his acts, and hence would have to be omniscient. No human being has yet been either. (It is not merely by chance that man has ascribed omniscience and omnipotence to the Deity.)

In order that he may be secure, an individual, having sloughed off the dependent security of childhood, must acquire new dependencies to substitute for his lack of skill and knowledge. He has left behind the infantile dependency on the parent and must acquire more mature forms. There are two avenues along which he may go. One is in the field of religion, where he may, through belief and faith, accept dependence upon a Deity. The degree to which he becomes dependent upon whatever faith he has accepted is a measure of his independent security—of course in inverse proportion. There is another channel along which he may acquire a substitute for the parental dependence which he has outgrown. We may call this his intimate life or the acquisition of intimates, commonly called friends. The degree to which he has achieved independent security will determine how closely this new social dependence approximates the infantile form or not. If he transfers directly from the parent to another, then the relationship will be exactly as a child to a parent and will be subject to the same catastrophes and cataclysms as the former.

The intimacies of adult life must differ radically from the intimacy that existed between parent and child. There must now be an interrelationship between two individuals in which each alternately as-

sumes the position of depender and dependee. This type of relationship is difficult to arrange, as is evidenced by the infrequency with which it is found. An intimate should be one who will act as a buffer for the failures one experiences in achieving independent security; one who will encourage under failure, refrain from undue praise, accept the fact of human frailty, and further the progress of independence. The individual who accepts or expects such treatment should be ready at any time to assume this rôle for the other. I think it is significant that the average adult has few intimates, and that individuals who have manifested pathological states of mind have seldom acquired an intimacy approaching the characteristics I have described above. The lack of intimate friends is the result of poor social training. The importance of friends cannot be overestimated. "Acquaintances" are often a detriment to independent social activity.

In brief, I have outlined the scheme upon which we are working here in Toronto. We hope shortly to publish a short monograph.* I will give you some examples to indicate the trend in our thinking. Let us take the economic field. Here is an adult whose goal is to lay by enough money so that he may retire at fifty. If "money" is the main goal, he strives to acquire as much of it as he can. In the process, he considers a sum, whatever it may be, the *thing* upon which he is depending, and his choice of behavior will be governed by a form of dependent security. If,

* *A Concept of Security*. W. E. Blatz and S. N. F. Chant. University of Toronto Press.

just before he has achieved his goal (or afterwards, for that matter), there is an economic crisis and the money is lost, this individual is thrust immediately into a state of insecurity. The source of his dependence has been eliminated, and his behavior will be influenced by his insecurity and the degree of skill he has acquired. The behavior of individuals in a panic is an illustration of what may happen. I think post-War Germany was the supreme example of a panic—although one might mention the United States at the time of the bank holiday. *If* the individual, in the course of his working, has acquired a skill, his security has been built up as an independent type because the skill itself is the basis of such security. Then the loss of money would, of course, be felt; but he would realign his efforts in another direction because of his confidence in the skill which he possesses.

Let us take another case. Here is an individual who has a job. In our scheme of civilization a job is necessary in order to live. If by any chance this job is dependent upon "pull" or influence, then the individual is dependently secure as long as he has faith in the continuation of his influence. But if he anticipates a catastrophe, then, in order to bolster up this dependent security, he must adopt certain forms of behavior which we call compensatory. Some evidences of this are arrogance, bossiness and the misuse of power, or a fawning sycophancy in order to curry favor and avoid the consequences of dismissal. However, if the individual has acquired his job through the skill he has learned and to which he is contribut-

ing, he is independently secure as long as the social system remains what it is.

To take still another example, here is an individual who is born into a family of high social status. This, of course, is an arbitrary factor. If he is dependent upon the accident of birth to perpetuate the privileges that such a status has given him, then he is perfectly secure as long as the social system remains constant. But if by any chance there is a suggestion that a social cataclysm may occur, then this person has to compensate by snobbery, exclusiveness, and vanity to protect himself against the feeling of insecurity. On the other hand, if an individual has obtained a position in society through skill of any sort, whether it be in the creative arts, or in conversation or in amiability, then obviously that security is of the independent sort and does not require any compensatory devices to bolster it up.

Let us now take some examples from childhood. A mother has been over-solicitous in preventing the child from accepting and enjoying the consequences of adventure. If a child is in a position where he feels himself to be in danger but actually is not, the mother often extricates him without letting him work out a plan himself. Under these circumstances we may expect the child, if this pattern continues, to become foolhardy, because foolhardiness is a manifestation of dependent security. One of the greatest difficulties in dealing with adolescents in our juvenile court practice is to persuade parents to permit their children to suffer the consequences of their behavior so that they may learn independence. Too often the

parent feels the child is not "old enough" to accept the consequences, and, through the influence of social position or money, helps him to avoid the consequences he should learn to accept. Later on, of course, the parent wonders why the child gets into difficulties. One might multiply such examples again and again.

Frequently, too, we find parents who become dependent on their children. Having neglected to acquire contemporary intimates upon whom to depend, they use their own children as a means of security—but security of the dependent sort. In such a case, not only is it difficult for the children to learn during infancy to begin throwing off the yoke, but it becomes almost impossible for the parent to adjust to the insecurity that arises when the children, at least physically, get out from under. It is usually a mother rather than a father who manifests this condition. That is why mothers-in-law are often greater social problems than fathers-in-law.

Let us take a look at tradition as a social phenomenon. Oftentimes traditional behavior patterns in group life are compared to habit formation in the individual. They are nevertheless quite different. Tradition is the means by which a society attains dependent security; habit is the means by which an individual attains independent security. Thus, an individual through practice develops a skill. All skills are habits, and it is through skills that we develop independent security. Tradition, on the other hand, is usually the result of the behavior of people dead and buried; and individuals use the prestige of such

a tradition to bolster up dependent security, especially social position, class privilege, and national honor. The fact that something is old is often made an excuse for its preservation (look at some of our architecture) and thus it is that traditions gain momentum. If we could place some of our traditions in glass cases in museums as we do examples of primitive art, our community would be far healthier. It is not just because of age that old people are reactionary. A well-balanced individual should become more adventurous as he grows older. We have been laboring under the delusion that childhood is the time for adventure, whereas this should be the time for caution. The adventure of adolescent youth is mostly foolhardiness and a sign of prolonged parental dependence.

It so happens that it is easier to train children to be dependently secure than independently secure. Startling as it may seem, it is easier to leave money to your children than to train them to make an independent living. It is for this reason that the plan I am discussing, which postulates the early emancipation of youth, is not popular.

If you will forgive me, Beth, for making a very brief and perhaps inaccurate diagnosis of your case: You have, as opportunity for mature dependencies, your husband, your friends, and your religion. I place them in this order after glancing back through your letters. Apparently you and Don were fortunate enough to have developed interdependence of the type that I mentioned above. I have seen no indication of jealousy, which is the first sign of insecurity;

and apparently both of you are willing to permit your children to grow up without being servile. After what you say of your bridge club, I am a little doubtful of your friends as adequate dependencies; boredom is another sign of insecurity. And you have your religion, which you are wise in maintaining, for doubt is a sign of insecurity, too.

On the other hand, you show ample evidence of independence with reference to your health, your family, your job, your economic status, and your social position. I am a little doubtful whether you are independent in respect to your leisure time; your remark that you had little time to do things because of your housewifely duties and your children indicates to me that you are prone to use the old alibi, "I have no time." It is in this connection, Beth, that I would make a suggestion. Instead of asking yourself what is going to fill your time when your children are gone, begin to arrange certain parts of the day for creative activities in which you are or may become interested—music, painting, writing, gardening, community organization, acting, weaving, anything—the more the merrier. *Then* you will not be threatened with nostalgia—a sure sign of insecurity—but will be looking forward to the time when present-day responsibilities will cease and there will be greater opportunity for pursuing those constructive activities which you never hope to finish, because they overrun the margins of our own lives.

I wouldn't take this too seriously, Beth. After all, you asked for it, and it is the failing of all doctors that they never miss an opportunity for making a

diagnosis, especially at long distance. I have an urge to diagnose Hitler for you—but I will spare us both.

What I am trying to point out, Beth, is that the basis of a complete life lies in continuously learning; that such a life is possible when one never sets a goal which can be achieved within a limited time without associating that goal with another which takes longer. Thus, when George goes to the University, as I hope he will someday, if his goal is to get a B.A., then that is not good enough; but if he considers his university education simply as a stepping stone to something further and then something further still, he will be continually learning and by learning will achieve independent security. Independent security, of course, can never wholly be achieved, and hence no life can ever stop, so far as motivation is concerned. The gratifications one experiences are the interim stops; but these, by their very nature, suggest further activity.

There is another point I would like to bring out at this time: the implications of this scheme on modern social legislation. One sees a great deal in the papers about the desire on the part of the working man for security, which term is used most frequently when one is discussing old-age pensions, insurance and relief of all kinds. Any state which attempts to provide this kind of security for its citizenry is building on quicksands, because this is not *security* but *safety*. This is suggesting a form of dependent security which can never admit of a full and complete life for the individual. Of course, it is relatively easy to provide such dependent security if the state is willing

to accept responsibility for the choice of the citizens' behavior. It is just this point that makes a great many of us apprehensive about the type of social legislation which is being introduced into democracies at the present time; and especially are we concerned with its effect upon adolescents. Whenever it is necessary, in any economic scheme, to provide dependent security for an individual throughout his life, there is definitely something wrong with the scheme itself. Obviously, the individual must live, must have certain comforts, but no democracy can survive unless the individual achieves these through the process of independent security.

To take another instance which is, perhaps, more pertinent at the moment, an individual seldom resorts to force in dealing with his contemporaries if he is independently secure. An individual under such circumstances will defend but never attack. Only an insecure person "gets sore" when arguing. Only an insecure executive, teacher, governor, will use force to "convince." So in a democracy one should never be defenseless, but the preparations for defense, which at the present time in this world of ours seem necessary, should never be looked upon as a means to safety. Whenever a form of behavior arises which is inimical to the carrying on of amicable social relations, it is always a sign of insecurity in one or both parties, and must be attributed to the sudden disintegration of dependent security. Fanaticism, bigotry, unwarranted aggression, snobbery, prudishness, bullying, lying, riots, strikes—all these may be traced to the fact that individuals have not achieved a de-

gree of independent security commensurable with their maturity, and are using some compensatory device, often sanctioned by the state, as a means of avoiding the consequences of their behavior.

You asked whether progress would be inhibited if individuals were "satisfied." Progress ends only when the individual has achieved a goal he has arbitrarily set. An individual who is achieving independent security never stops learning, and the results of his learning may be represented under this scheme by creative activity of any kind. The airplane was not invented because of the necessities of warfare. To say that war stimulates creative activity may have a grain of truth; but the stimulation is only a matter of degree and not of kind; and who would not forego some of the advances we have made in mechanical transport, for example, if we had been able to avoid the circumstances of its more rapid growth? However grandiose has been the progress in our mechanical environment, there has not been an equal amount in the adjustment of the individual to these new developments. What is more grotesque than the fine precision of a printing press placed within a stone's throw of a city slum? What is more anomalous than to see the *Queen Mary* and to realize that one torpedo may destroy it in three minutes? What can be more striking an antithesis than the splendor of our Parliament buildings and cathedrals and the bickering that goes on over relief? And what more convincing testimony of this statement than the huge sums that are expended on war and the picayune handouts for education and recreation?

In other words, Beth, life is a continuous process and there is no one goal or incentive, other than the desire to learn, which can satisfy an individual in such a manner that he will not feel it necessary to interfere in any way with the satisfactions of others. Learning is intimate and need never be competitive. A complete life is never finished.

Yours,

Bill

POSTSCRIPT

Dear Bill:

You psychologists certainly have the knack of making life complicated. I think your letters are interesting more for what they leave out than what they put in, but perhaps that's the way you wanted it.

This last letter of yours has provided more food for discussion than any of the others. I can see now why you place so much emphasis on education, and early education especially. You *do* give us parents a ray of hope, however, when you suggest that failures are important and salutary. (I suppose the failures of the parents can be included in this category too.)

You are an optimist, Bill, and it is this aspect of your philosophy that appeals to me most. With all the carnage going on in Poland and Finland, it was gratifying to feel that you have hopes of making us ensure our children a happier and more peaceful social organization than we ourselves can enjoy. Whatever sacrifices parents have to make, I am sure any plan, even if it takes three generations to fulfill but gives us hope, is worth undertaking. I can't tell you how grateful I am for the time you have taken from a busy life to answer my letters, and I can't think of any more fitting climax than that you should come

down and visit us and let us pick holes in your theories. I know you well enough to guess you would enjoy that much more than if we agreed. When will it be?

Yours,

Beth

Dear Beth:

I cannot resist getting in the last word. One of the qualifications of a teacher is optimism; no pessimist is ever a teacher for long.

I would like to sum up in a few words what has taken so many pages to relate.

War is not an instinct. There are no social instincts. Human beings have more to learn than any other species. Education, and not propaganda or censorship, is the ideal directive method.

The emotions are useful, enjoyable and thrilling experiences. It is only through lack of education or faulty direction that fear and anger become devastating and disintegrating experiences.

Discipline is a plan of education which depends on a rational arrangement of consequences rather than upon punishment, retaliation or sentiment. Suggestions are more effective than force, and patience more efficient than commands. The chief aim of education is the development of human values which will contribute to, rather than make demands upon, community life.

Security is the only healthy goal in life. Safety is

dangerous. Insecurity makes for progress; but if the individual does not accept the challenge of insecurity, then he finds it necessary to adopt some form of compensation. These compensatory mechanisms are the root of all social turbulences, of which war is the most disgraceful and unnecessary.

In looking over these letters, Beth, I am nonplussed at their volume. You started me off on the question of children's attitudes toward war and how to treat them, and I have apparently wandered all over the map. However, I feel, and I hope you concur, that I have not often been irrelevant. After all, we cannot give a stock formula for dealing with any "problem" of childhood. Successful child rearing is not a matter of treating symptoms. One must understand children and appreciate the phenomenon of growth as a continuous process which must be directed continuously. I have tried to indicate how this educative process might be conducted.

War, as an episode in an individual's life, is after all an episode. Like any other crisis it must be met efficiently. Sexual maturity, marriage, vocational adjustment, the menopause, disease, accidents, and finally death are also episodes more or less drawn out. We all have to meet these "crises." A plan of education must prepare the individual for these experiences. Unfortunately, at the present time, war, too, seems an inevitable crisis.

I have tried, in these letters, to do two things: to suggest a plan that would *first*, protect children against the unnecessary and hence avoidable consequences of the state of war, and *second*, raise a gen-

eration of children who would so arrange their own social customs that war would be eliminated as a device for solving problems.

The plan is the same in both cases. By developing a pattern of behavior based on security as a goal, the child grown to maturity can "take it" even in war and in the war zone.

I don't know what the effect of bombing is or will be upon young children. The children of Madrid and Barcelona and Warsaw and Helsinki will afford us an opportunity of study. But of this I am sure, that if the children were raised under the scheme I have outlined, they would come through even such experiences of horror, terror and destruction without serious mental harm. The example of the parents and standards of the community morale will determine the extent of the influence upon the children. Take, for instance, the evacuation of the children in England. If this social pilgrimage is carried on reasonably, calmly and efficiently, then no harm will follow. But if it is conducted inefficiently, with confusion and undue emotional excitement, it may be more harmful than bombing. From my files I have selected two cases in point. Both these children, between two and three years old, were on ships torpedoed at sea, the *Lusitania* and the *Athenia*. Both were separated from their parents at the explosion, and rescued. Some time afterward they were united with their parents. In the former case the parental disturbance was excessive, and for some years the child showed emotional patterns which were unusual. In the latter case, because the parents were well adjusted there has

been no undue effect noted since the accident. These cases indicate that the surroundings of the child during and after a crisis are more significant in determining the effect of such experiences than the apparently serious character of the crisis itself.

In other words, Beth, even at war it is possible to be sane.

The second object of my letters is more important—training our children to avoid war. It may take three generations to accomplish this task, but after all, one of our aims in living is to afford our children, through intelligent education, an opportunity for a fuller life than we ourselves enjoy. I don't mean more money, more travel, more clothes, more degrees, more leisure, but more opportunities for doing what is more interesting. Lest I start all over again, Beth, I had better stop.

By all means question everything that I have written. I am doing the same. When the hullabaloo in Europe is over, I can feel again that our efforts can be directed towards a surviving peace. In the meantime, we are at war—and I may have urgent duties to perform.

Until then, "thanks for the memories" of our early good times when these problems didn't bother us at all, and for this interlude of correspondence. Thank goodness, we are mature enough, and have the courage, to be bothered still about these questions.

Yours,

Bill

Dear Bill:

I demand my woman's privilege—but this last word will be short. Good-by and good luck.

Yours,

Beth

INDEX

- Ability. *See* Capacity
Achievement, nature of, 102, 139 ff.
Actions, factors determining, 37
Adventure, nature of, 89 ff.; ideational, 92 ff., 190
Aggression, 31; wars of, not justified, 46-47
Allegiance, oaths of, 171
Anger, nature of, 67 ff., 71, 72, 83, 149, 150, 199
Appetites, 38, 54
Approach and withdrawal, attitudes of, 37-38
Approval, influence of, 31; nature of, 145-146, 147, 151
Army, place of, in a democracy, 115-118
Arrogance, 58, 127
Attitudes, 30 ff., 37, 54 ff., 145 ff.; personal, toward life, 178-181
Behavior patterns, 30-35; determining factors in, 37 ff.; altered by learning, 39; effect of emotions on, 39; standards of, 100 ff., 131-135; factors that influence, 104 ff.; developing social patterns in children, 107 ff.; scheme for motivation through security, 181 ff.; unsocial, 195-196. *See also* Social behavior
Belief, phenomenon of, 34 ff.
Boredom, 193
Bravery, nature of, 90
Cadet corps, problems of joining, 118
Camp, example of boy's, cited, 158
Capacity, nature of, 139, 142
Censorship, 131-136, 162, 171, 199
Character, development of, through games, 158-159
Characteristics, racial, 77-79
Child development, 30-32
Child-parent relationship, 182-186
Child training, against aggression, 47-48; in evaluation, 59; for leadership, 60; in matter of anger, 71-73; in avoidance of hatred, 75; in matters of discipline, 76, 98-99; in matter of fear, 82-87; in adventure situations, 90-92; in moral courage, 92-95; in standards of behavior, 100-114; in matter of punishment, 114-115; attitude toward military training, 118-119; for satisfaction through skills, 144-149; toward power through sports, 149-153, 158-159; for a democratic social order, 165-166, 168-170; by example, 172; aims in, 200-201, 202
Child-training program, ready-made values in, 44
Choice, exercise of, 104, 110, 143 ff.
Citizenship, process of learning, 16
Compensations, 200
Competition, 150, 158

- Compromise, nature of, 12, 18
Concept of Security, A, cited, 188 ff.
 Confidence, cultivating, 113
 Conform, social necessity to, 99 ff.
 Consequences, 105 ff., 110
 Co-operation, nature of, 10-11, 16-17
 "Cops and robbers," 163
 Cowardice, nature of, 90, 91, 119
 Crime, nature of, 103
- Danger, 89
 Defense, preparation for, 195
 Democracy, what is it?, 163-168, 171-172
 Dependence, security through, 182-184
 Dictatorship, nature of, 100 ff., 167
 Disapproval, nature of, 31, 145-146, 147, 151
 Discipline, 132, 199; emotion taboo in, 72, 76; problems of, 98 ff.
 Dogmatism, 127
 Dominance and domination, 55 ff.
- Eating, social factor in, 41
 Education, nature of, 33, 124-128, 199, 200
 Emotions, effect of, on behavior, 39-40; characteristics of, 63-79, 149 ff., 199, 200. *See also* Anger, Fear, Rage
 England, effect of evacuation in, 201
 Entertainment, child, 160
 Environment, influence of social, 31 ff., 77-79; consequences of physical, 106
 Evacuation, effects of, in England, 201
- Failure, standards of, 143 ff., 147. *See also* Success and failure
 Family organization, social factor in, 42
- Family responsibility, development of, 169 ff.
 Fear, nature of, 67 ff., 81 ff., 199; exploitation of, 87-89, 94, 151
 Fighting, nature of, 31-32, 42; is it necessary?, 43
 Fixations, emotional, 73, 104 ff.
 "Flights of fancy," 93
 Flying, thrill of, 89
 Foolhardiness, 90, 190
 Football, emotions and, 150, 151-152
 Force, nature of, 57; justifiable use of, 110
 Freedom, nature of, 47, 165 ff.
 Friends, relationship between adult, 187-188
 Frustration, 68
- Games, nature of, 149; belligerent, 163
 German people, indoctrination of, 77-79
 Glory, nature of, 45
 Goals, 176. *See also* Wants and needs
 Governing, nature of, 170
- Habit, nature of, 50, 140
 Happiness, the pursuit of, 176 ff., 180
 Hatred, nature of, 68, 73, 74 ff.
 Heroism, nature of, 90-91
 "History repeats itself," implications of phrase, 50
 Honesty, nature of, 103
 Honor, nature of, 44, 45-46
- Ideals, 20-21
 Imagination, 92
 Independence, security through, 184-193, 195
 Indoctrination, 124, 128
 Insecurity, 60, 200
 Inspiration, 72
 Instincts, nature of human, 28 ff., 42, 199
 Intelligence, nature of, 139
 Interference, parental, 144-145
 Intolerance, 58
 Isolation, effects of, as consequence, 109

- James, William, cited, 64
 Jealousy, 69, 192
- Laziness, nature of, 148
 Leacock, Stephen, quoted, 28
 Leadership, 60
 Learning, emotion a spur to, 40; nature of, 65 ff., 102 ff., 138 ff., 146, 148-149, 183, 194
 Legislation, security through social, 194 ff.
 Lies and lying, 93, 103, 107-108, 148
 Life, question of purpose in, 178 ff.; basis for a complete, 194
 Literature, censorship of, 135
- Military life. *See* Army
 Military toys, 160-163
 Misdemeanor, nature of, 103
 Moral courage, nature of, 92-95
 Motivation, nature of, 37 ff., 139 ff.
 Motives, 37, 55, 63 ff., 102, 105, 176
 Movies, censorship of, 135
- Nations, characteristics of, in relation to war, 43 ff.
 Naughtiness, nature of, 103
 Needs. *See* Wants and needs. *See also* Motives
 Nightmares, 85
- Oaths of allegiance, 171
 Obedience, 113-114
- Pacifism, 48
 Patriotism, nature of, 9-22; goal of, 60-61
 Persistence, nature of, 140, 142
 Philosophy, war analysis in terms of, 49
 Power, nature of, 57, 138, 151, 152-154, 157, 158
 Practice. *See* Persistence
 Prestige, nature of, 127
 Pride, nature of true, 15-16, 18-19; of false, 17
 Privilege, nature of, 165, 169-173
 Progress, development in, 196
- Propaganda, 116, 124, 130-131, 153, 166, 199
 Punishment, 113-115
 Purpose, meaning of, 34 ff.; problems of, 176 ff., 179
 "Pursuit of happiness," 176 ff.
- Race characteristics, 77-79
 Radio, censorship of, 136
 Rage, nature of, 71, 83, 150
 Rationalization, 49
 Religion, 178, 187, 193; war analysis in terms of, 49-50
 Respect, cultivating, in children, 113
 Responsibility, 18; child's acceptance of, 111; teaching, 168-173
 Retaliation, effect of, 108, 114
 Running away, reason for, 109-110
- Safety, concept of, 182; social legislation for, 194, 199-200
 Satisfaction, need for, 32, 142; motives and, 55
 Skepticism, values of, 131
 Science, war analysis in terms of, 29-48
 Security, dependent, 182-184; independent, 184-193, 195, 199
 Self, development of, 30 ff., 54 ff., 143
 Self-discipline, 166, 170
 Sex, 86-87, 103, 178, 181, 183
 Skill, dominance through, 58; development of, 127-128, 159
 Snobbery, 58
 Social behavior, basis of, 40-42; racial, 77-79
 Social consciousness, how developed, 30
 Social environment, effects of, 31 ff., 77-79
 Social legislation, security and, 194 ff.
 Social organization, choice of alternatives in, 46-47
 Social pressure, 57
 Society, organized, 46 ff.
 Sports, nature of, 149
 Standards of behavior, 132-133

- Standards of success and failure, 148-149
Stealing, nature of, 103
Submission, 55 ff.
Success, standards of, 145
Success and failure, study of, 158 ff.
Suggestion, use of, in child training, 111-112; power of, 199
Tabloids, censorship of, 136
Teaching, nature of, 99 ff.
Temper tantrums, 71
Terror, 84
Textbook censoring, 171
Thwarting, problems of, 69, 82
Tolerance, nature of, 13-15, 19
Totalitarianism, 167, 171
Toys, military, 160-163
Tradition, behavior patterns in, 191-192
Values, ready-made, 44
Vulgarity, problem of, 134
Wants and needs, 140 ff., 176 ff.
War, bases for present, 19-21; is it an instinct?, 28 ff., 42, 47; analysis of (in terms of science), 29-48, (of philosophy), 49, (of religion), 49-50; emotional stimulation leading to, 44-46, 73-76, 153-154; hate not essential to, 76-77; relation of moral courage to, 95-96, 117-118; nature of, 199, 200
Winning and losing, perverted emotion in, 149-155, 157

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